

SCHOOLS AT WORK IN 48 STATES

A Study of Elementary School Practices

Visitors and Reporters:

Effie G. Bathurst

Paul E. Blackwood

Glenn O. Blough

Mary Dabney Davis

Wilhelmina Hill

Gertrude M. Lewis

Helen K. Mackintosh

Arne W. Randall

Elsa Schneider

Coordinator of the Study

Helen K. Mackintosh

Bulletin 1952, No. 13

**FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
Office of Education**

**Oscar R. Ewing, Administrator
Earl James McGrath, Commissioner**

Contents

	Page
Foreword	VII
Introduction	VIII
SELECTION OF SCHOOL SYSTEMS	VIII
PREPARATION FOR OBSERVING	IX
EXTENT OF THE STUDY	IX

TEACHERS AT WORK

In-Service Educational Programs for Staff.....	1
WORKSHOPS	2
TEACHERS' MEETINGS	3
CONFERENCES	4
STUDY GROUPS	6
PUBLICATIONS	8
SEEING OTHER TEACHERS AT WORK	8
APPRAISING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	9

Teacher Participation in Curriculum Planning	10
PLANNING GROUPS	11
WORKING COMMITTEES	12
A CITY'S PLAN	14
A COUNTY'S PLAN	16

Orientation of New Teachers	19
A HANDBOOK	19
CONFERENCES	20
SUPERVISORY HELP	21
A PROGRAM	21
OTHER HELPS	22

Using Local and Nearby Institutions of Higher Learning	23
--	----

PUPILS AT WORK

Page

Classroom Groups	27
GRADE GROUPS	28
AGE GROUPS	28
CHILDREN WHO LIKE TO BE TOGETHER	28
COMMITTEES	28
INTEREST GROUPS	29
GROUPS OF CHILDREN WITH SIMILAR DIFFICULTIES AND NEEDS	30
ABILITY GROUPS	30
COMBINATION OF GRADES	31
HOW GROUPS ARE ORGANIZED	32
TEACHER-PUPIL PLANNING FOR GROUP WORK	32
WHAT HAPPENS IN GROUPS AT WORK	36
EVALUATING GROUP WORK	39
Children Working Independently	41
ASSIGNMENTS AND TASKS	41
HOBBIES, DIARIES, AND FAVORITE WORK OR FUN	42
HELPING OTHERS	42
SCHOOL SERVICES	43
Student Councils	46
PURPOSES OF STUDENT COUNCILS	46
KINDS OF ACTIVITY	46
ORGANIZATION AND SPONSORSHIP	49
CHILDREN'S APPRAISAL	51
School Clubs	53
VARIETY OF INTERESTS	53
ALL-YEAR CLUBS	53
COMMUNITY INFLUENCES ON CLUBS	54

THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Developing Understanding and Skill in Reading	57
GETTING READY TO READ	58
READING ABOUT OUR OWN EXPERIENCE	59
READING FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE	60
READING FOR PLEASURE AND APPRECIATION	61
ORGANIZING REFERENCE MATERIALS	62
LEARNING TO USE AN ENCYCLOPEDIA	63
LEARNING TO USE THE DICTIONARY	64

CONTENTS

v

	Page
Learning To Write and To Spell	65
WRITING LETTERS	65
SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS	66
EFFORTS AT WRITING POETRY	67
Using Numbers	67
SCHOOL PARTIES	68
SCHOOL STORES	68
TEACHING USE OF NUMBERS IN SCHOOL SITUATIONS	70
COMPUTING COST OF TRAVEL	71
SCHOOL SERVICES	71
Using Science Meaningfully	72
A LESSON ON BULBS	73
SCIENCE IN EVERYDAY THINGS	74
THE SCIENCE OF CONSERVATION	75
Learning How To Be Well and Safe	77
PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL LUNCH ACTIVITIES	77
NUTRITION STUDY	80
CAMPING AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES	80
PREPARING FOR HEALTHFUL, HAPPY, AND SAFE VACATIONS	81
PLAY AND RECREATION	82
Improvement of Social Understanding and Experience	83
MAKING CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL GROUNDS ATTRACTIVE, CONVENIENT, AND SAFE	84
BETTER HOME LIVING	85
STUDYING AND WORKING IN NEIGHBOR- HOOD AND COMMUNITY	86
THE WAYS AND GROWTH OF DEMOCRACY	91
LEARNING HOW TO BE FRIENDS-TO OTHER PEOPLE AND TO OTHER NATIONS	95
Enjoying Creative Expression	100
ART IN EVERYDAY LIVING	101
ART EXPERIENCES RELATED TO OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	102
LOOKING AT THE WORK OF OTHERS	104
DRAMATIZATION AND PUPPETRY	105
SINGING, BANDS, AND ORCHESTRAS	106
DANCING AND RHYTHMS	108

	Page
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY AT WORK TOGETHER	
Parent-Teacher Groups	110
THE GOALS	110
THE ORGANIZATION	111
SERVICES TO THE SCHOOLS	112
HEALTH AND RELATED ACTIVITIES	114
THE TEACHING AND LEARNING	115
School-Community Relations	117
AN ADVISORY COUNCIL	118
A BULLETIN	119
COMMUNITY PROJECTS	119
CHILDREN USE THE COMMUNITY RESOURCES	120
Communicating With Parents and Other Citizens	122
PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES	122
DEMONSTRATING	123
AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK AND BUSI- NESS EDUCATION DAY	124
NEWSPAPERS, RADIO, AND TELEVISION	125
VISUAL AIDS	127
OTHER PUBLICATIONS	127
LETTERS TO PARENTS	128
A PROFESSION AT WORK ON ITS PROBLEMS	
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	133
INDEX	135

Foreword

Schools at Work in 48 States is a record of a cooperative study made over a period of 2½ years by nine staff members of the elementary school section of the Office of Education, with the advice and help of their co-workers.

Such a study requires that the group of persons working together arrive at some commonly accepted principles of education in order that as they visit schools they may not only observe and record, but also be able to identify what they have seen and heard with these principles of good teaching and learning. Over a period of a year's time and preliminary to the visits, the Elementary Section staff discussed the contributions of each subject area to a total school program that is good for children. They continued such discussions as reports of visits were made in an attempt to relate principles and practices throughout the study.

Information about ways of working to improve education for children needs to be shared on a broad basis, not to bring about undesirable uniformity, but rather to stimulate widespread discussion and evaluation of elementary school practices. It is hoped that the bulletin may help improve classroom teaching and bring about closer relationships between school and community.

The Elementary Section staff members who had the opportunity of visiting schools in the 48 States wish to express appreciation to consultants in elementary education in State departments of education who suggested places to visit, and who often helped in making plans; and to all personnel in individual schools and school systems who generously made available all of their facilities that would contribute to the success of the study. Effie Bathurst and Glenn Blough assumed responsibility for editing and writing the manuscript.

WAYNE O. REED, *Assistant Commissioner,
Division of State and Local School Systems.*

GALEN JONES, *Director,
Instruction, Organization, and Services Branch.*

Introduction

Many teachers and administrators are interested in "How other schools are doing it." How do schools interest more parents in the work of the school? How do they bring about better total school planning to improve the curriculum? How do they organize student councils and other groups for effective operation? These are but a few examples of questions frequently asked by almost everyone interested in improving education for children.

There are many good current practices in schools throughout the United States that need to be described for the benefit of others who may adapt these ideas to suit their own local situations. Some of these practices are described in this bulletin.

Material for the bulletin was gathered by staff members of the Elementary Section of the Office of Education through visits to classrooms; in interviews with superintendents, supervisors, principals, school board members, parents, teachers, and children; by reading school bulletins, survey reports, handbooks, news letters, annual reports, and similar printed materials of the selected school systems and by examining examples of children's work.

Selection of School Systems

At least one school system in every State was visited. Several factors influenced the selection of these school systems. As an initial step in the selection, members of the various State departments of education interested in elementary education were asked to identify good school systems in their States. These schools constitute most of those visited (see pp. 133-134 for listing). It was, however, impossible to visit every school listed by State departments of education because of limitations of time and of travel funds. Additional schools were suggested by members of the Elementary Education Staff of the Office of Education. Some of these were included in the visits. In many cases the determining factor in school selection, within the limits just described, was the travel schedule of the staff already established in relation to consultation service. It is important to say here that in many cases a practice described is probably not typical of a whole school system, but may be true only of a specific school in the system since usually

only one school in a locality was visited. The practices described may not be typical of those of the State either.

A similar study of organization and supervision in a hundred schools was conducted by the staff in 1947-48.¹ The schools visited in connection with that study were in general not used in the present one.

Preparation for Observing

In planning for the school visits, the staff had a series of discussions devoted to various aspects of elementary education, including the problems of teaching in the different subject matter fields, various philosophies of education, problems of teaching and learning, uses of materials, and other phases of education. Through these preliminary discussions, several concrete suggestions for visiting were evolved. Then, after a number of visits were made, the findings were discussed. After each of the first 25 visits was made, the staff members heard detailed reports, asked questions of each other, and tried to determine those practices that would be most helpful to teachers in general. Those who made the later visits could then look for evidences of these practices. Through such refinement of purposes and concentration upon certain types of experiences that children should have, the group making the study arrived at an outline for this bulletin. This flexible outline helped to focus attention of the observers on such things as teachers and children at work, the relation of school and community, and the means used to improve teaching. The data collected through use of this outline form the basic material of this report.

Extent of the Study

We cannot justifiably say *most* schools are doing a certain thing because not all schools or school systems reported material on the same problems. The report attempts to set down as concretely as possible a description of how some schools in various parts of the country are effectively handling certain common educational problems. Material is not necessarily included because it is new. Readers will find in this bulletin descriptions of things "they have been doing for years," along with procedures they have never tried. Practices are described because they meet the needs of children and teachers in a specific local situation. The procedures described are not intended to be copied. It is hoped that they may stimulate

¹Organization and Supervision of Elementary Education in 100 Cities, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1949. (Bulletin 1949, No. 11).

readers to look carefully at their own practices for purposes of evaluation. Perhaps the most important use for the bulletin is to give a picture of what is happening in education in certain places in the United States.

Specific schools are not identified by name; States only are mentioned. In some cases practices of several schools are combined in a summary statement. In other cases only a brief account of a practice is set down because of space limitations.

Schools at Work does not describe methods of teaching used in connection with various school subjects. Methods of teaching are discussed in a series of Office of Education bulletins entitled *The Place of Subjects Series*.² Included in the series are: (1) *The Place of Subjects in the Curriculum*, Bulletin 1949, No. 12; (2) *How Children Learn To Think*, Bulletin 1951, No. 10; (3) *How Children Use Arithmetic*, Bulletin 1951, No. 7; (4) *How Children Learn About Human Rights*, Bulletin 1951, No. 9; (5) *How Children Learn To Read*, Bulletin 1952, No. 7; (6) *How Children and Teacher Work Together*, Bulletin 1952, No. 14. Two other bulletins in this series are yet to be published.

²The bulletins are available at 15 cents each from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.



TEACHERS AT WORK

In-Service Educational Programs for Staff

In-service education for all school personnel—teachers and administrators and others—each year assumes increasing prominence in schools throughout the country. The modern curriculum with its diversity of demands, the need for a common philosophy in the school staff, the practice of attempting to adjust curriculum material and methods of teaching to fit local and individual situations, and the necessity of employing teachers whose preparation is not adequate have been mentioned by educators as some of the reasons for this increased emphasis. These and other problems are responsible for the fact that almost every school system visited reported some plan for in-service education of its personnel.

In some cases this educational program is closely identified with a local or nearby institution of higher learning. In many instances the in-service education program is part of a total curriculum-planning project in which the entire school staff participates.

Although the in-service programs as reported in this section are varied in content and organization, they seem to have common

purposes: to supplement previous educational experiences, to solve problems peculiar to the local situation and thus fit the needs of the particular school, and to assist teachers in keeping abreast with educational developments.

As in the case of the other sections, the fact that an idea is reported here does not mean that we feel that it is unique. We are reporting various practices as they were observed. A composite picture of these practices helps to give an idea of the various ways in which schools are meeting their problems of in-service education.

A wide variety of in-service educational activities are included in the various programs—pre-school workshops, summer workshops, workshops held during the school year, organized courses, study groups, city-wide teachers meetings, and building meetings in each individual school.

While many, probably most, of these activities involve only elementary school teachers and administrators, some school systems report that they either are now including or intend to broaden the scope of in-service education to include teachers from secondary schools and in a few instances from the junior college faculty.

For example, a school system in Wyoming has planned its in-service program with the total 12 grades in mind, using certain elements of a life adjustment program as the basis for organization. Teachers are working, regardless of grade levels, on such committees as: Committee on Unmet Needs, Committee on Adaptability, Committee Concerned with Home-School-Community Relations, Committee on Evaluation and Research. Several other school systems report similar committee organizations, some temporary; some that function throughout the year.

Workshops

Workshops as a type of in-service education activity vary as much as the concept of a workshop itself. In nearly all cases, however, the workshop is distinguished by the fact that its chief purpose is to provide opportunities for teachers and facilities for them to work with on problems of concern to them in the improvement of their work. It is probably accurate to say that the majority of the workshops are organized on the basis of a preliminary survey of the teaching staff to determine interests and needs. Typical of the areas selected are art, audio-visual aids, child behavior, exceptional children, curriculum planning, family life education, conservation, international relations, language arts, science

and health education, and social studies. Sometimes teachers of a specific grade choose to work together. In terms of these choices, the teachers' problems are organized and plans for working are evolved. Local supervisory staff, visiting consultants, community individuals, and faculties of local colleges are used whenever they can best help.

In addition to these workshops in more or less specialized areas there are many workshops which begin as general elementary education workshops but, as they progress, develop into small groups organized to care for special interests. One school system in Ohio reports a series of in-service workshops to be held for three successive years, each year involving one-third of the teaching group. These are general education workshops.

Some especially interesting features of this plan are: (1) Individual schools in the system may decide which year they will participate, and once the decision is reached *all* members of the staff of that school participate. This means that at the end of the 3-year period *all* teachers will have been involved. (2) A planning group consisting of teachers and principals gathers problems from the entire school system and organize them into large areas for consideration. (3) Each school is urged to continue the work individually after the workshop is over. In this way there is time to explore the problems further and adapt the findings to the individual schools. (4) Each school invites a lay person or persons to participate actively in the workshop. These individuals bring a report to the parent group or study group in the school represented. (5) Leaders and recorders are selected to work with the groups. They receive special advance help from the supervisory staff and other qualified persons. (6) The local university gives 1 hour of credit for participation if teachers so desire.

Teachers Meetings

Teachers meetings, as a method of in-service education, seem to have undergone considerable rehabilitation as indicated by the observations. Chief among the new characteristics is that the meetings are definitely planned with the needs and interests of the participating teachers in mind. The meetings are planned in response to these needs and interests and are evaluated on the basis of how well they fit these needs and interests. Plans for improvement are based on these evaluations. In addition to the traditional lecture method a wide variety of methods are used, such as observation of teaching, study of a significant educational motion picture, reading and art demonstrations, and using science materials.

Conferences

Conferences held before school begins in autumn, called pre-school conferences, are common among the schools visited, although there is great variety in these conferences. In many instances, the main purpose is to explore problems and set up a plan for study and improvement of instruction for the coming year. Often several big areas are identified for study, and teachers and others select the area or areas in which they wish to work during the conference and through the coming year. The organization set up at the pre-school conference, or some variation of it, is frequently carried on through the year with provision for reporting to the whole staff and for publishing the findings and recommendations, if that seems desirable.

Not all conferences, however, are held at the beginning of the school year. Some, like the next one described, are held during the school term.

An Ohio school describes an in-service program for teachers which culminated in an elementary education conference, with special reference in this case to improvement of science instruction at the elementary school level. In the spring, a committee of teachers in this city of 400,000 worked with the elementary science specialist of the State university, which is in the same city. They planned a work session in science for elementary teachers and invited approximately 60 teachers to attend. At the first meeting of these teachers, the committee members served as leaders and consultants. The group worked with elementary science materials. This session aroused so much interest that plans were made to include additional teachers. As a result, through cooperative planning by the curriculum coordinator, the elementary supervisor, the elementary principals, and the elementary science specialist, all the elementary schools in the city were given an opportunity to participate in an extended in-service program on the teaching of elementary science.

As a first step a seminar group was organized. It consisted of 30 teachers who met regularly with the elementary science specialist. Each school was represented by one or more teachers. The representatives either volunteered or were elected by the faculties of the individual schools. The seminar met each Wednesday evening for 2 months and for several Saturdays. The primary purpose of the seminar was first of all to help the members become more familiar with the methods and materials of teaching elementary science. The secondary purpose was to help other teachers in the city improve their teaching of science.

To attain this latter objective, the group focused on a 1-day conference to be attended by all 900 elementary teachers. Preparation for the conference involved, first of all, the development of resource materials for teaching in several science areas such as "Children's Experiences with Machines in Daily Living," "Children's Experiences with Light, Heat, and Sound," "Understanding Our Bodies," and "Children's Experiences in Understanding the Story of the Earth." Included with these resource materials were directions for doing many experiments.

The group planned to help all of the teachers in attendance to learn about the methods and materials represented in the resource materials. This called for organizing 30 work groups. Each member of the seminar became a chairman, responsible for taking leadership in a work group. As plans developed, an assistant chairman was chosen. In most instances the assistant chairman and the chairman were from the same school. As the conference day approached, these 60 persons called on others from their schools to help out. As a result, a large number of teachers had a part in planning for the conference and in making preparations for group work.

Nearly 8 months after the seminar was organized, the mid-year elementary education conference was held. The theme was "Utilizing Science Experiences in the Elementary School." The conference was held on a school day, and the children were dismissed



Learning about hamsters and the methods of science and enjoying both, Baltimore, Md.

from school. Nine hundred teachers attended the morning and afternoon sessions.

The morning session consisted of two addresses by specialists in the teaching of elementary science and a panel discussion on "Implications for Science Teaching in Our Schools." The panel consisted of elementary teachers, principals, and the specialists in the teaching of elementary science. The purpose of the morning discussions was to show how science experiences help children solve their problems and to clarify the role of science in the total elementary school program.

In the afternoon the teachers reported to the 30 study groups, approximately 30 teachers per group. They had been assigned to groups according to their preference of topics. The purpose of the work groups was to give a large number of teachers first-hand experiences with science methods and materials. In addition to the opportunity of working for 2 hours with materials on one problem area, the teachers were given mimeographed copies of the resource materials used by every other group. The intensive, long-term study and planning of teachers in preparation for these work groups was a distinctive feature of this conference. Although this activity was called a conference, it is obvious from this description that several of the other in-service techniques of working were involved.

Study Groups

In most cases study groups are based on problems judged by the teachers to be especially important for consideration. Typical of such a study group is one reported by a city school system in Illinois. The group had its beginning when some of the primary teachers met to discuss the problem of reading in the early grades. These teachers soon realized that the problem was an involved one and deserved wider attention than they, as a group, could give it. They recommended that the guidance service committee take over and present a plan of action. (This is a standing committee composed of teachers and administrators charged with the responsibility for various phases of guidance, including in-service education.)

This guidance committee recommended a program to study child development and assisted in organizing such a study. Its initial purpose was to get basic facts about growth and development of children from infancy to adolescence. The committee recommended that study groups be formed in each school. Thirty-two different groups with from 15 to 20 persons each were organized. These

groups included teachers as well as interested parents and professional people in the community. The board of education set aside \$1,800 to finance this study. Money was to be spent for printed materials and films, as well as for the professional services of a specialist in child growth and development.

The specific phases of child growth selected by different groups varied greatly. Provisions were made for the various groups to come together periodically to share their findings. A wide variety of professional and occupational interests was represented in the study. For example, the chairmen of some of the groups were: a school nurse, a teacher, a sports reporter on the local paper, a parent, a pastor, an assistant pastor, a State attorney general, a pediatrician, a former professor of a university.

The steering committee for the child study program, composed of principals, teachers, a board member, and several parents, went to Chicago University for a week to prepare themselves for planning a better series of meetings. A thorough survey of resource persons in the city was made. This list includes pediatricians, doctors, psychologists, nurses, and others who indicated a willingness to help the study groups. From 8 to 12 meetings were held this year by each group. Throughout the coming year, representatives will continue to go to Chicago University to meet with leaders in the field of child development and to bring back suggestions for the local study groups. Through cooperative planning the groups explored the field of child study as well as the related problems of reading in the primary grades.

Similar study groups were reported in many States. One such group was able to set aside a room in one of the school buildings to be used as a child study laboratory. A part of this room was set aside for a professional library which includes books, bulletins, pamphlets, inexpensive materials of various kinds, courses of study, teachers reports, periodicals, and displays of work by children. Another section of the room is devoted to files containing cumulative records and other useful information about the pupils whom the teachers are studying. These records show such things as each child's personality development, the curriculum activities in which he has a part, samples of his work, and similar items.

Several schools report study groups designed especially for parents and teachers to work together on problems of common concern (For more detailed discussion see section on Parent Teacher Groups, p. 110).

Publications

Several types of publications were mentioned as in-service education aids. One school, for example, issues a publication containing ideas that teachers wish to pass on to others for professional improvement. The publication includes examples of: Ways of working in specific areas, ideas for studying children, ways of keeping records of progress, and reviews of professional books which they found helpful. Another school stresses the importance of its teaching manuals which are prepared to give teachers information pertinent to the local school system that will contribute to their growth as teachers. Some schools issue a series of special leaflets dealing with specific problems such as: "Teaching in the Kindergarten," "Helping Slow Readers," "Planning the School Day." In some cases these are planned and produced by a committee of interested teachers; sometimes by parents and teachers; sometimes they are prepared by the supervisory personnel. In many cases they are used as a basis for discussion at teachers meetings.

Seeing Other Teachers at Work

Several schools make provisions for teachers to see other teachers at work in their classrooms as part of the in-service educational opportunities. In some schools new teachers in small groups are provided with opportunity to see special demonstrations of work with children. In other schools this opportunity is open to all interested teachers. Provision is then made for discussion and evaluation of the procedures observed.

One Ohio school reports a rather unusual procedure as part of its in-service education program. An elementary supervisor set up a demonstration room in one of the schools where the learning opportunities for children seemed to be fewer than in the other schools. Pupils from the first three grades from different classrooms in the building made up the group. The elementary supervisor demonstrated with children for a period of more than a month. School in this room lasted during an entire morning. It was open to all interested teachers and there were discussions following the observation. There was great enthusiasm for this activity, and as a result of it several bulletins were issued explaining and expanding the activity that had been observed. The school considers this experiment one of the activities that greatly influenced practice in the classroom.

Appraising Professional Growth

In-service education should, of course, result in growth of all concerned in it; however there seems, at least from the school reports examined, to be little evidence to show how much and what kind of growth results from participation in such programs. One Illinois school system has given some attention to growth of teachers although it is not entirely tied in with the in-service education program. It is described briefly here for what value it may have to schools interested in giving attention to this phase of in-service education.

In this city the board of education, a few years ago, made a ruling that each teacher would be required to give some type of evaluation of his growth as a teacher. This ruling placed a great responsibility on the administration because of the danger of undermining teacher morale through fear of teacher ratings. Therefore, an attempt was made by the school policies committee to work out a method of evaluation which would be acceptable to the teachers, would encourage growth, and would not be thought of as a rating device. After careful work for several months, the policies committee developed a pamphlet called "A Growth Pattern To Be Used for the Study and Stimulation of Good Teaching, Supervision, and Administration."

According to this plan each teacher works out a statement of his own growth pattern and in a personal interview with the principal of his school discusses ways in which the pattern might be improved. The principals also prepare written statements of their own growth patterns which are discussed with the elementary supervisor.

There are many problems in connection with this plan. For example, it has been found that teachers write very few suggestions for their own professional growth. An analysis of this tendency has shown that teachers are afraid "the Central Office" will hold the suggestions up as an assignment.

One growth pattern a year is prepared by teachers on probation. One growth pattern every other year is prepared for teachers on tenure. There is no tie-up of this study of professional growth with salary. Salary is based solely on experience and years of service. For the most part, the teachers believe that working out the growth pattern is good. If nothing else, it requires time for teachers to confer with their principals. This school indicates that the method of evaluating professional growth is considered still to be in an experimental stage.

A large city school system in Texas has issued a bulletin called *The Growing Teacher*, which sets forth a somewhat similar plan for promoting and measuring professional growth of its teachers. The superintendent says: "*The Growing Teacher* is a suggestive guide in analysis and improvement and is the outgrowth of a year's serious study in which our elementary teachers participated. The teachers met in committees, discussing, planning and making recommendations concerning the various topics: How I Qualify as a Person, How I Qualify as a Teacher, How I Develop Democratic Living, How I Cooperate with Others. Studies were made of present-day evaluation programs used in other cities throughout the Nation. The best available educational books, pamphlets, and periodicals about teacher qualifications were read. Findings and suggestions assembled by the various committees served as a basis for this handbook. The value of the bulletin will depend on the manner in which it is used by the individual. It is not a finished product; rather, it is offered as a challenge to all teachers to strive toward optimum growth."

The foregoing in-service education programs seem to recognize certain basic principles of teacher education: that it is important for teachers to identify the problems which they feel are essential for study; that they themselves should develop the method for studying these problems and carry out their plans; that there should be provision for individual differences in these plans since teachers have different aptitudes, interests, skills, and abilities and work best when these are taken into account; that learning by doing is appropriate for teachers as well as for any other learner and consequently the program should not be entirely a "listening" one; that a variety of ways may be employed to bring about growth in teaching ability and professional attitude; and that studying children and how they grow and develop is fundamental to an in-service teacher education program.

Teacher Participation in Curriculum Planning

In describing the planning of a school program, one superintendent of schools writes, "The school exemplifies the meaning and spirit of democracy in all its organization, personnel, and processes. The board, superintendent, teachers, and pupils all have their part in planning and participating in such a program."

There is evidence from the record of the work in his school that he also includes parents in this over-all organization and participation. A similar point of view is expressed by many other administrative staff members who are charged with the responsibility of initiating curriculum changes. They are practically unanimous in believing that teachers must be actively involved in curriculum planning if the school's program is to be successful.

Planning Groups

A wide variety of ways of working are used to bring about democracy in planning curriculums, establishing school policies, and operating the school in general. For example, several types of planning groups were reported. One New York State school system has a superintendent's cabinet that has been in operation for a dozen years. It consists of principals, supervisors, teachers, board members, parent-teacher groups, representatives from various community clubs, and other community groups. This cabinet makes recommendations regarding school matters to the board of education.

An Illinois city school reports that for the past 8 years a planning committee has directed all major curriculum activities and



Parents and teachers plan a program of study for the year, District 10, Woodstock, Ill.

has helped with other teaching problems. It is composed of a teacher representative from each grade level from kindergarten, through grade eight, a representative from each school building, the chairmen of any standing committees for improvement of teaching subject-matter areas, chairmen of any current professional committees, and representation from administration groups. This planning committee reviews problems, plans areas of study, coordinates the school calendar, and works on many other phases of the total school program. Committee recommendations are submitted to all school personnel for criticism, additions, deletions, and other changes. Sometimes the problems for consideration by the planning committee arise from groups of teachers as in the case of the kindergarten teachers who wanted a free morning during the first week of school for the purpose of holding parent conferences. They submitted their case to the planning committee who took action. As one of its projects the group planned a 4-day teachers pre-school workshop. The group reports periodically to all concerned. Other school systems reported similar plans.

Working Committees

The following brief description of an Indiana school system's work on revision of report cards illustrates how a school system, through committee organization, attacks a specific problem related to instruction. The work began when teachers questioned the validity and value of the report cards they were using and asked to experiment with different types of reporting. They requested the parents to discuss reporting problems at parent-teacher meetings. Then an initial working committee was appointed by the superintendent of schools. It consisted primarily of principals because the teachers felt that it would, under the present set-up, be easier for principals to meet for initial discussions. The teachers themselves were represented through the principals of their buildings. These principals also worked with the parent groups.

The committee obtained copies of report card forms from various parts of the United States. They obtained 15 copies of each sample, mounted them and gave the samples to each school for study by parents, teachers, and children. The samples were also studied and evaluated by the committee. On the basis of this study a philosophy of reporting was evolved. Then a questionnaire was sent to all teachers in the system asking for reactions to many different problems and suggestions. The results of this questionnaire were tabulated and incorporated in a report of progress, which included a temporary report card.

All elementary teachers met in their own building to discuss and evaluate this tentative report card. Parents and children were included in these meetings. The resulting suggestions were tabulated by the committees and incorporated in a new temporary card which was to be used for 1 year. A bulletin was prepared to accompany the report card. Copies were sent to all teachers and parents and included statements of why progress should be reported, what the new report of progress aims to do, what the progress reports would look like, and how all concerned may work together to make the new report of pupil progress a success.

The foregoing illustrates how a whole school may cooperate in the solving of a school problem. It is included as an example of what appears to be a trend toward more democratic procedure in curriculum planning.

In a smaller school system in Colorado much of the curriculum development is accomplished through the efforts of an elementary curriculum planning committee. This committee is made up of one representative from each elementary school with no more than 2 principals serving at one time. The election is for 3 years. Membership is staggered so that only one-third of the members are new each year.

The purposes of the planning committee are: (1) To advise with and coordinate work of other curriculum committees; (2) to make reports to faculty groups and get opinions and advice on curriculum problems; (3) to keep faculties informed of progress and plans for curriculum changes; and (4) to identify curriculum problems and suggest ways of solving them.

As an example of the way in which the committee functions the following description is given:

Three years ago a questionnaire was sent to all teachers to find out the areas in which they wanted help. On the basis of this questionnaire three areas were chosen for study—social studies, health, and science. Curriculum area sub-committees were formed to carry on the actual work of curriculum improvement.

These committees operate in the following way: (1) When a curriculum area has been selected for study and major revision, all the teachers are called together to discuss the program and to make suggestions which would point the direction the change is to take. (2) A committee (usually of 5) is chosen to revise the program. (3) When the revised program is tentatively prepared, the teachers are all brought together again to discuss it. With the suggestions incorporated, (4) a mimeographed copy is provided each teacher for trial purposes for a year or two. While the curriculum guide is being tried out, the committee continues to function. Final revisions are incorporated and the guide is reproduced in a permanent form. (Each teacher has a large notebook

in which "permanent" documents from the central office are filed for easy access.)

As an illustration of how one of these committees functions in a specific area, the following account of its work in improvement of the health program is included. The work of the committee resulted in the publication of a "Guide for Teachers in Planning a Program of Health Education for Use in Elementary Grades." (Tentative form.) The following quotations from the foreword to the guide describe how a questionnaire was used to obtain information from both children and parents about health interests.

The Health Committee conducted a survey to determine the children's health interests, needs, and the interest level at which certain health subjects should be taught. This was done because most teachers agreed that interest is one of the strongest motivating factors in learning, and to be successful, learning experiences must be based on the children's interests and concerns.

First a list of 150 questions to be used in the survey was compiled by the committee with the aid of local physicians, nurses, psychiatrists, parents, and teachers. These questions were then administered by the teachers to 5,000 children in grades one through six. Five hundred parents were also given the opportunity to answer the questions.

Questions were based on 14 health areas as they concerned the individual and the group, without regard to the age level or previous health knowledge of the child.

The results of this health survey were the determining factor in the committee's formulation of the health guide, as the interests of the children at different age levels were very pronounced in certain areas. The responses of the children were tabulated and given percentile ranking. Only the questions rating in the eightieth percentile or higher in any grade were used in making the guide for that grade.

The committee feels that by using the material in this health guide, teachers can chart a health program that will be continuous, functional, and above all important to young people, because it is based upon the interests of children at their particular age level.

Realizing that the complete school health program consists of healthful school living, professional health services and a school health program, the committee feels that this guide will aid the teacher in fulfilling the third step in the school health program.

A City's Plan

A director of curriculum in a Michigan city says that he believes curriculum planning has three phases: "over-all, individual school building, and classroom." He has initiated a plan based on this belief that contains the following features: (1) A curriculum laboratory in the central office containing textbooks, professional materials, films, records, pamphlets, and many other kinds of useful material. A former teacher is in charge of the laboratory. She,

with two assistants, assembles or prepares various kinds of materials on request. (2) A curriculum development budget for travel, consultants, and guides. Last year more than 200 teachers went on school-visiting trips to other school systems in search of materials and ideas to help solve local curriculum problems. (3) Re-



Learning by doing in a rural workshop for music, Marin County, Calif.

leased time for teachers to work on curriculum. In this connection selected teachers are employed during the summer to work on special curriculum assignments. (4) A survey of existing courses of study and bulletin materials every 4 or 5 years to find out *present* practices—to find out “what we have before we begin to change.” (5) A committee in each individual school in different curriculum areas to help to implement the curriculum change and development. (6) A professional growth committee in the form of a teachers club represents all teachers and all administrators and works to improve the in-service training and curriculum work. (7) Annual progress report organized according to “The objectives of the curriculum departments” and “The degree of accomplishment during the past year.” In this report the objectives set up the previous year or years are restated and followed by a clear indication of what has been accomplished, what remains

to be done, and plans for the future. The report also contains "Objectives for the Coming Year." These are divided into "Overall Curricular Objectives" and "Limited Curricular Objectives."

A County's Plan

The following plan from Maryland for curriculum improvement is included because it is specific in its organization and is concerned with helping elementary and secondary teachers plan together, and because it illustrates how a county group may operate in contrast to a city group just described.

Early in the administration of the new county superintendent there were several half-day county-wide meetings of teaching personnel to identify needs and to make plans for work. In addition to these general plans there have been summer workshops, in-service meetings of the entire teaching personnel, and small group meetings. A large percentage of the total personnel of the schools has participated in the work of the 13 committees. These committees are all constituted from personnel interested in a continuous program from grades 1 through 12. In fact, this is one of the important emphases of the county-wide program. The reports of these committees indicate that teacher participation in planning has been both widespread and effective. The following brief record from each committee indicates the scope, plan, and progress.

Committee 1—Unmet Needs Committee

This committee, along with other suggestions, recommended that a junior college be established in the county; that more attention be given to adult education in general; that more attention to mentally handicapped children be considered; that more recreation experiences be planned for the summer.

Committee 2—In-Service Education Committee

This committee sent a questionnaire to all the teachers in the county to try to determine what kind of in-service education teachers and others in the system preferred. In brief, the committee concluded that teachers seemed to get more benefit from small meetings and that they needed more practical help concerning practices in classrooms.

Committee 3—Adult Education Committee

(It will be noted that some of these committees, for example, committees 1, 2, and 3, overlap somewhat in their scope.)

The adult education committee recommended for adults in the

community more opportunities in the following fields: typing, shorthand, driver education, public speaking, arts and crafts, music, and clothing.

Committee 4—Report Card Committee

This committee was formed because several parents indicated that they did not understand the present method of reporting. The committee worked in several ways to bring about a closer understanding between the school and the parents regarding report cards. This committee, as well as the others, is continuing its work. It plans to work on a report card which may be used at all levels from grades 1 to 12.

Committee 5—Beginning-the-Day Committee

Because many parents ask about the opening exercises of the school day, this committee began to explore the possibilities for improving this part of the day. Recommendations are being made, and in many cases carried out, to reserve a block of time each morning for planning the day with children. This one phase of planning with children is being expanded to help children in all grades participate more generally in planning their work.

Committee 6—The "Know-How" Bulletin Committee

This committee has attempted to record outstanding practices from different teachers in the county. These reports are assembled and periodically issued so that all persons in the county may come to know some of the outstanding practices of all teachers.

Committee 7—The Extracurricular Activity Committee

This committee has recommended that if an activity is important to the school, it should be included in the regular curriculum area, and is working to incorporate so-called extracurricular activities into the regular school program.

Committee 8—The Child Welfare Committee

This committee has considered and made recommendations on such things as the following: school lighting, eye and ear tests, health needs, and other unmet needs of children. (Note: This is another example of overlapping committees.)

Committee 9—School Calendar Committee

Until recently, as is the case in most places, the school calendar has been made in the central office. This committee has been charged with the responsibility of making the school calendar. It is

composed, as are the other committees, of interested teachers. They have been given essential information from the central office, such as: the number of regular school days, vacation plans, and legal holidays, and within these limitations, have made the school calendar which has been unanimously adopted by the board.

Committee 10—Assisting New Teachers Committee

A series of separate meetings have been held by several of the new teachers and several innovations have been made as a result of this committee.

Committee 11—Material Specifications Committee

This committee made recommendations on 100 or more items for use in schools. They checked on the quality of materials and made recommendations regarding changes. They urge all teachers to order only what is needed, not expecting their orders to be cut.

Committee 12—Teacher Welfare Committee

This committee considered such items as salaries, cumulative sick leave, and subsistence for summer school attendance.

Committee 13—School Furniture Committee

This committee has been active in helping to choose school furniture for the schools which are being built in the county, as well as for those buildings already in existence.

The reports of these committees have been made available, not only to all of the school groups, board of education, administration and supervision groups, but to other groups in the county. For example, the presidents of organizations of various kinds in the county met with the chairmen of these committees to hear the reports. These organizations and individuals consisted, among others, of the following: Lions Club, Rotary Club, civic clubs, women's clubs, American Association of University Women, Farm Bureau, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, doctors and ministers in the county, boosters' clubs, and members of the legislature. Plans are being made for these reports to be made to other county groups.

These, then, are some of the ways in which teachers are involved in curriculum planning and in management of school activities. Many other similar examples could be cited. In connection with teacher participation we should say that several instances were reported of teachers also being involved in such projects as planning new

school buildings or remodeling old ones. In some places, teachers submit ideas and have no further responsibilities; in others the architect and superintendent work closely with teachers, custodians, parent groups, and sometimes older children from the time the building is first thought of until it stands in full use.

The activities described in these pages seem to show that better curriculums and better teaching and learning result when everyone concerned with the educative process is involved in making the plans and carrying them out. Many persons work together in the selection of furnishings, in determining wall coloring and room arrangements, and in formulating other plans that help to make the building meet the curriculum needs.

Orientation of New Teachers

In most schools there is, for one reason or other, a considerable turn-over of staff. Increased enrollment and other factors make frequent addition of new positions and personnel necessary. Many schools realize that teachers who are teaching for the first time or those that are new to the school system face problems that are peculiar to their situation. Considerable attention has been given to the problem of introducing these teachers to their new assignment and community with increased effectiveness and efficiency.

Connected with the problem of orienting new teachers is the problem of helping "emergency" teachers to fit into the work of the school more effectively. Many of the ideas expressed here are indicated as useful to both new teachers and emergency teachers.

A Handbook

One large school system has spent considerable time compiling a "Handbook for New Teachers" based on the suggestions and recommendations which new teachers have made over a period of years. These teachers were asked to respond to such questions as: What kinds of help did you find most useful from the administrative staff? What were your most pressing problems in adjusting to your new situation? What things would be most helpful to you in your own building? The book contains, among other items, a short history of the city and of the school system; a discussion of the procedures for the first day and week; suggestions for orient-

ing children to their new classroom; a list of kinds of places and of persons in the community that may contribute to the education of children; a summary of the general philosophy of the school as regards discipline and other such matters; some general suggestions about keeping records; and a bibliography of additional readings helpful in orientation.

Several other schools publish booklets similar in nature, but different in detail. A Delaware school reports such a detailed booklet. Some school systems report that each elementary school prepares a supplement to the school-wide publication that deals specifically with orientation problems within the school itself.

Conferences

Several larger school systems stress the importance of holding pre-school meetings attended only by the new teachers at which the various courses of study, bulletins, and other printed materials are given out and discussed. New teachers learn what helps are available to them from the central office and from their individual buildings, become acquainted with the general philosophy of the school, and in other ways become oriented. In some places these teachers are later called together and consulted about how the next groups of new teachers might be more successfully oriented through these pre-school conferences.

In an Ohio city new teachers join with the whole staff in a series of meetings at the opening of school. After they have been in school a week, the staff conducts a special workshop in which new teachers learn about facilities that are available to them. They learn what advisory help is available, what libraries, tests, and other materials they will find useful. There are two such meetings held in the evenings.

A little later in the school year, usually during the first month, there are Saturday morning meetings in which new teachers are grouped according to the grade which they teach. An experienced teacher and a principal assist with these meetings during which new teachers discuss things that disturb them. At these meetings, courses of study, methods of taking care of individual differences, and other such items are discussed.

The supervisors at first follow up these meetings only by request from the teachers. If no request is made by the teachers, the supervisory staff may ask to visit the rooms and provide necessary assistance.

Much attention is given to assisting weak teachers. The principals in the individual schools are considered to be supervising

principals, but they refer unusual problems to the school supervisory staff.

Early in the school year there are several social meetings for new teachers.

Supervisory Help

In many cases special supervisory help is made available to new teachers as they begin their work. Supervisors give help in planning, organizing, and locating materials of instruction, in keeping records, and similar matters. In some large city systems one supervisor is detailed full time to the orientation of new teachers.

Several schools assign helping teachers to work with new teachers on their special problems. In some cases these helping teachers are selected from the city school staff to serve for 1 year, after which they return to their regular duties. In other cases they are permanent members of the supervisory staff and when necessary devote, especially at the beginning of the year, a considerable amount of their time to the problems which new teachers have.

In connection with a supervisory plan, in many places arrangements are made for new teachers to visit other classrooms in their own school and in other schools in the system to observe the general teaching conditions and "get a feel for the philosophy of the school system."

A Program

An Arizona school system which has turned certain phases of its "new teacher program" over to its local Education Association describes the program as follows:

The local Education Association's program this year covers several weeks' work, which culminates in two busy days before the regular "pre-opening" of the school program. On July 26 a committee from the Education Association wrote letters to all new teachers. The letters offered assistance and also included information about the meetings that had been planned. They read:

Dear _____ We are glad to welcome you. We hope most sincerely that you will be happy here and enjoy your work among us. Knowing that it is often difficult to become adjusted to a new community, may we offer you our help? We will be delighted to meet you and help you become comfortably settled or will be more than happy to furnish you with rental lists and a map of the city. Above all, we want you to know that we will be at your service so that we may help make your first days happy ones.

With the cooperation of the Chamber of Commerce, the Sunshine Climate Club, and other interested organizations, members of the association prepared folders containing all kinds of material about the city and

the Southwest. These folders were given to the new teachers when they arrived. Some of them probably know more about the community and what it has to offer than do many of the "old-timers." August 28 and 29 were busy days but most worth while for new teachers, community leaders, and the schools. The following skeleton outline gives some idea of the activities of this year's program:

MONDAY, AUGUST 28

8:30. Know Your Community.—A get-together breakfast was held in the high-school cafeteria. There were soft music, beautiful flowers, good food. The president of the ministerial association gave the invocation, the mayor made a speech of welcome, and new teachers and community leaders were introduced. Representatives of more than 30 local organizations were present.

10:30. Know Your Schools.—Introduction of administrative personnel and a brief discussion of the characteristics and general structure of the schools.

2:45. Professional organizations.—NEA, AEA, and TEA.—Explanation of organization services—credit union, insurance, retirement, tenure, and a discussion of State and county aid to schools.

7:00. Swimming Party.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29

9:00. Know Your Classroom.—Group meetings—primary, intermediate, secondary.

10:30. Principals and new teachers visit their schools and their classrooms.

1:00. Integrating Resources.—Guidance and counseling.

2:30. Creative activities.—Music, art, and crafts.

6:00. Barbecue and square dance.

On the following Thursday evening one of our leading department stores had a fashion show especially for teachers. By this time our new teachers felt at home and all of the teachers, townspeople, and community leaders were on the way to another fine school year.

Other Helps

One elementary school principal makes it a point to see that new teachers have an automobile ride around the school community. This helps them to see the kinds of homes the children live in, the types of industries that are nearby, and to learn things about the neighborhood which might influence the teaching and learning. The principal himself assumes the responsibility for this feature of orientation.

Another school reports that it assumes responsibility for assisting new teachers in locating living quarters and the local Chamber of Commerce makes a special attempt to acquaint new teachers with their new environment and entertains them at a dinner meeting.

A school in Mississippi and several others report that new

teachers are assigned experienced teachers, in their own building, as helpers for the first several months of their work. New teachers depend on these assigned helpers for many details, but are, of course, free to get assistance from other sources.

One school is proud of the fact that members of the parent-teacher group call on all new teachers and offer their services. Whenever possible, the parent-teacher representatives even meet them at the railway station. These parent-teacher members continue throughout the year to assume some responsibility for the orientation of the new teachers.

We see, then, that many schools recognize the fact that new teachers and teachers new to a school system face problems with which they need assistance. There is evidence that programs for the orientation of these teachers are planned to fit their individual needs, that in addition to professional help they also need help with personal problems, and that a variety of ways are used to bring about a smoother adjustment to a new environment.

Using Local and Nearby Institutions of Higher Learning

Institutions of higher learning are assuming an increasing amount of responsibility for assisting their graduates and other teachers who work within their areas of influence. Many of the school systems visited reported a close relationship between them and these institutions.

In several instances definite follow-up studies are made of the institution's graduates to see how effective their pre-service education has been and how the college may continue to serve. The services as reported by the various school systems are varied in amount and kind, but the general objective seems similar in all cases: To extend the services of the institution to meet the educational needs of teachers in service. This section points out some of the ways in which the school systems work with these institutions.

Several school systems reported an arrangement whereby near-at-hand colleges and universities cooperated in filling specific needs through offering special lectures or conducting workshops or conferences in special areas. The school system and the participating

college work together in selection of personnel, development of program, and follow-up activities.

Several of these school systems reported that one example of close relationship is through student teaching assignments. Especially competent teachers in the local school systems serve as critic teachers. These teachers work closely with the director of student teaching from the college or university. This contact often affords opportunity for the cooperating school system to select for their permanent staff, the most promising student teachers. A Pennsylvania school reports that these student teachers have been responsible for some innovating practices in the local school.



Learning to read, Tucson, Ariz.

Several school systems reported that the colleges to which they supply critic-teacher services extend to teachers who work with college students waivers of tuition if they wish to attend summer school at these institutions.

One university reports that Spanish language majors assume responsibility for the teaching of Spanish in the sixth grade in the city school where the university is located. The room teachers assist and attempt to carry on the work between the times the Spanish teachers come. Another school system reports that the needs of the physically handicapped and children with other dif-

difficulties are met in part through special consultative service from colleges. This affords opportunities for students to have practical experience in dealing with these cases and provides services for the school system that would otherwise not have them.

An Indiana school system reports that it has cooperated with a local college in carrying on an experimental reading program in selected schools. The director of the reading clinic at the college is working closely with four fourth-grade teachers in diagnosing difficulties, selecting materials, and programing special help.

A Georgia school system reports similar services from a local university in establishing a speech clinic.

Another school system described a center for advanced study which utilizes the services of two nearby universities and the local college. This school system requires 6 hours of college credit for every 5 years of teaching to meet its professional growth standards. The credit may be earned in several ways: through formal course study, travel, research, or writing. When enough teachers indicate an interest in a particular course, the course is organized by one of the participating colleges.

An Oklahoma school system reported that a nearby college is currently offering weekly seminars in social studies which any interested teacher may attend. The board of education pays half of the fees of each attending teacher who may or may not receive credit, as desired. This seminar continues throughout the time that the local curriculum committee is centering its attention on the improvement of the social studies program.

An Indiana school needed expert advice and information about school building needs; consequently the board of education employed local university school building experts to make a comprehensive survey in cooperation with local administrators and teachers. Through this cooperative arrangement recommendations for enlargement of school facilities were made for the present and future.

In a similar vein but less extensive in scope, is the use a Georgia school system has made of the landscape club of the local university. The club received practical experience in preparing a blueprint of plans for the school grounds of the new school buildings and assisted the schools in obtaining and planting the plants.

A Virginia school system reported that the principals of the school requested a meeting with the deans of instruction of the teacher-preparation institutions in the State to discuss in detail the needs of teachers on the job. Such a one-day meeting was held and plans are advanced for continuation of this study.

Institutions of higher learning are, to an increasing extent, making their staffs and facilities available to work on problems of concern to the teachers and administrators in their areas. Cooperatively with public-school systems, they are designing courses, sponsoring conferences and workshops, and supplying consultants to work on specific problems. Cooperative planning between public schools and institutions of higher learning appears to be on the increase with beneficial results to both.



PUPILS AT WORK

Children learn through their experiences. When we look at the experiences sponsored by the school, we see children at work. We see the curriculum being built. Let us look at children at work in the school systems represented in this study. We will see boys and girls working in informal groups, we will see them working alone and independent of the teacher, and we will see them working in organized groups such as student councils and school clubs. We will see ways in which many of the boys and girls grow in the skills, understanding, and competence that life in our society requires of them.

Classroom Groups

In all schools, children work in groups at least part of the time. The group of longest standing is the grade group. Some schools name groups by the chronological ages of the pupils. These are age groups. Within grade or age groups, schools often provide for groups of children who like to work or play together, committees for specific jobs, interest groups, ability groups, and groups of children who have similar problems and needs.

Grade Groups

Before teachers studied children as intensively as good teachers do now, all the children thought to have the same or similar ability in the traditional school subjects were brought together in a grade. The grade group was then regarded as homogeneous. Generally speaking, grade groups were taught as single groups.

Age Groups

In schools that use age groupings, the group of children who enter school in September at approximately 6 years of age is known as the 6-year-old group or the 6-year-olds. In their second year of school, these pupils become the 7-year-old group, or the 7-year-olds; and so on through the first 3 to 6 years of school. Where age groups are formed, some schools regroup children according to changing needs and interests. They work in small groups in ways discussed later.

Children Who Like To Be Together

Certain schools in Maryland, Massachusetts, and other States, probably as a result of modern study and understanding of children, arrange for children who like to be together to work within their age group as single smaller groups. This type of grouping is flexible. A group of pupils may break up when the problem or project on which they were engaged is completed, or they may continue as a group for several activities. Sometimes such a group is changed to include one or more of the pupils of another group. Often when new activities are undertaken, friendships have so changed that completely new groups are formed. Teachers help children in forming groups to meet their needs.

Committees

When children within an age group plan large group projects, there are specific tasks for smaller groups. These smaller groups work as committees in relation to the major job. A group in a Connecticut school undertook to protect their school ground from erosion. Committees were formed for special jobs, such as interviewing neighbors or town officials, reading up on different kinds of grass to be used and reporting these to the class, making working plans and doing the work, making signs, or doing other tasks connected with the main activity. In schools where such activities are undertaken, interviewing committees may be formed because certain children are good at taking part in interviews, or because they have not so far had an opportunity to take part in an inter-

view, or because they have some skill needed for the undertaking, or because interviewing seems to be a way for them to achieve some needed development. When the tasks are finished, these committees are disbanded. This type of classroom grouping is most often reported.



Fun on the farm in the kindergarten, Hammond, Ind.

Interest Groups

Interest groups sometimes form for a single lesson and then disband, as in the case of an Illinois second grade that read the Walt Disney version of *Alice in Wonderland*. The children discussed interesting episodes and reread parts they liked. Then they divided into six groups and worked independently for a short time. Each group planned a dramatization of a certain incident. Then the groups gathered into one big group again, and each small group presented its dramatization to the class. Some of the presentations were in the form of charades, and the class listened and decided what episode from the book was being shown. A North Dakota fourth grade made a study of dogs, beginning with the children's pets and extending to important breeds, characteristics, and uses of dogs. The class formed groups, read a variety of materials, interviewed people, and reported to the class as a whole. Similar instances were observed in other schools. Such activities give children opportunities to work with others who are interested in the same things, to evaluate materials, to compare ideas, and to present them in interesting ways to others.

A school visited in New York State provides another example of young children working in temporary interest groups. About 40 kindergarten children were engaged in free play. With the help of a teacher, one group chose blocks; another, transportation toys; and a third, home activities. Each worked in a separate corner of the room. Two children were at a table looking at picture books. The play lasted for perhaps half an hour. Then tables and chairs were pushed back and space was made for the children to move about. While the teacher played appropriate records, half the children moved in rhythm and the other half observed and listened. The records were played with the general instruction to "dance any way you want to, the way the music makes you feel."

Groups of Children with Similar Difficulties and Needs

In most experience curriculums, projects are planned to provide a wide range of activities, requiring different types of abilities. Some children are likely not to have all the skills or abilities needed to cope with the problems that arise. Children who need certain instruction or practice are formed into groups to work with the teacher until they have acquired what they need. When their goals have been achieved, these groups are disbanded, and new groups are formed to work on new types of problems. In the cooperative store described on page 68, some of the children took time out to learn to do division, to write orders for supplies, and to write advertisements and notices.

Ability Groups

Temporary groups are formed when children are learning the mechanics of the tool subjects. Suppose, for example, three or four children need practice in seeing and reading words in thought groups instead of one at a time. The teacher helps these children in a single group. When the pupils have learned this particular skill, the group is disbanded and the teacher helps the children find another group that meets their needs.

In a few schools or systems, classes are organized into from three to five basic groups for reading. This plan is being tried in the schools of one Kentucky county. Each one-room school or single classroom is divided into four small groups according to skill in reading. These children are also grouped for other skills, such as arithmetic. Reading groups and arithmetic groups do not

always have the same pupils. A child may have difficulties in reading, yet be able to do very well in arithmetic. Usually ability grouping is made flexible to provide for moving children who change in rate of learning.

A school in Connecticut has six ability classifications for teaching academic subjects. One is an advanced group in which the children do not require much guidance from the teacher. Another is the middle group which requires only a fair amount of guidance. A third group is composed of children who need a great deal of guidance and direct teaching, especially on techniques. The fourth group needs much help, particularly in the 3 R's and on techniques. The fifth and sixth groups are somewhat retarded, especially in reading and spelling. Children are moved from group to group when desirable.

A Delaware school finds reading levels by asking the children to read aloud from a set of textbooks reserved for the purpose. Five reading levels in this school are recognized as follows:

Independent reading level (where a child makes no mistakes)

Instructional level (where a child misses more than 1 in 20 running words)

Frustration level (where he misses many words)

Capacity level (hearing level)

Readiness for reading (A readiness test is given to beginners. It helps determine whether a child has developed socially and emotionally enough to begin learning to read. It helps answer parents' questions on why their children may not be reading in books.)

More important than the way of finding an ability level, in the opinion of consultants who suggest ability grouping in the schools mentioned, is the flexibility of such grouping. Teachers in the schools observed say they move a child from one group to another when he has learned the skills needed or when he wants or needs a skill being taught in another group, provided he is ready.

Combinations of Grades

The unit organization of grades 1-3 and grades 4-6 is the opposite of ability groupings. By this plan in certain schools, whether 1-room or graded, children who would be normally in these grades are kept together without grade distinction. Sometimes the primary unit helps the teacher provide for individual differences in ability or interest, especially in reading. As progress warrants or interests change, children are moved from group to group during

the school year. Teachers have also developed ways of helping children read at different levels in the same group. The basic idea is to keep the children feeling successful. There are no failures with this plan. All the children are doing work at their own level. Some schools that use this type of grouping appear to do so as a middle step in breaking away from rigid grade grouping into a program that is based on our knowledge of the way in which children grow and develop and on the facts we have about the relation of children's needs to the school program.

An Ohio city has two unit groupings: Kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3 in one group, and grades 4, 5, and 6 in another group. Often the teacher moves along with her children. The schools are not fitted arbitrarily into one kind of schedule. Time is divided according to needs. Children are allowed to continue an activity as long as their interest is high, or until they have finished, but they are not forced to continue to a point of lagging interest. The teachers are free to do what is good for groups and for individuals within groups.

How Groups Are Organized

Some groups work informally. They have no chairman or other officers. Other groups select a chairman and a secretary or recorder before they begin work. In an Iowa school, in a class of 40 pupils, 6 or 7 groups are formed for some class activities. Before the class breaks up into these separate groups and starts working, teacher and pupils talk about selecting a chairman and about the work a chairman does, including helping the group get started, filling in if no one makes a suggestion, helping make information available, and helping the group to summarize and write its reports.

Teacher-Pupil Planning for Group Work

In many schools which try to provide opportunities for democratic living, teachers and pupils plan together. This does not mean that the teacher makes no plans of her own. The teacher studies her pupils in order to know the needs of each one and to be prepared to guide each into the type of activity that will do the most for him. When the teacher needs her own plans, she makes them, giving particular attention to ideas for possible activities; books, pictures, and other sources of information; and community resources. Visitors observed the characteristics of teacher-pupil planning mentioned below.

Teacher studies pupils.—According to a bulletin on teacher-pupil planning published by a city in Maryland, the teacher in her own preparatory planning examines the needs and interests of the children in her class and plans opportunities for them to be considered in the school program. She anticipates some of the problems that are likely to arise and thinks of ways in which the children can go about solving them. She selects materials and references that will be useful to children at their various ability levels. When she meets her pupils she has, instead of a ready-made plan of her own, many ideas and resources to draw upon as she plans with the pupils. She is prepared to modify her thinking in accordance with the ideas and interests of the class. She is ready to help them in setting up plans which they can accomplish with satisfaction and which will contribute to their development.

Activities are basic.—When planning together, teachers and pupils usually consider the tasks to be done in solving problems or carrying on activities. They select the tasks of greatest importance, organize them, and, when necessary, cooperatively assign them to individuals or groups. Together teacher and pupils decide on what materials will be needed and where they can get them. A large part of teacher-pupil planning is done before the class breaks into small groups. An example of teacher-pupil planning frequently observed in the schools is a listing of questions or of things to do made by teachers and pupils together.

In a California community it is necessary for people to conserve water, and the entire community works on the problem. In school 1 year, the pupils of grade 4 became interested in the situation and began a study with the question, "What has been done to increase the water supply?" In planning together the teacher and children listed the following things to do in getting their study started:

Find out where the community's water comes from.

Ask if the fourth grade may visit the source of supply.

Find out how the community plans to increase its water supply.

Find out why the community needs more water now than in earlier days. (More people have moved in because of increased industry in San Francisco, where most of them work.)

Gather books and other sources of information.

System is part of planning.—In one school in Michigan, the curriculum department suggests the following steps related to teacher-pupil planning:

- (a) Teacher explanation and teacher-pupil discussion of possible topics or problems.
- (b) Teacher-pupil selection of the over-all topic or problem.
- (c) Teacher-pupil selection of the phases of the over-all topic or problem to be investigated by the whole class, individuals, or committees within the class.
- (d) Teacher-pupil discussion and decisions regarding activities, methods of investigation, and resources to be used.
- (e) Teacher-pupil investigation of phases of the topic or problems decided upon.
- (f) Teacher-pupil reports and discussion of the findings.
- (g) Teacher-pupil evaluation of results.

A simple pattern of teacher-pupil planning in a primary group was observed in a New Jersey school. After talking about things to be done during the day, the teacher and children stated the main jobs. One child wrote them on the blackboard.

Our Plans

We will talk about our plans.

We will do number work.

Some of us will learn about a safety patrol.

Others will learn about air mail.

We will share what we read.

Planning requires a look ahead.—In many schools, students and teachers were observed planning future excursions and long-term enterprises together. A Wisconsin second grade, for example, planned a visit to the railroad depot. Here are some of the things they planned to do. They decided to meet the ticket agent and see him write out tickets. They decided where to watch the trains come in and where to see people getting off and on the trains with their baggage. They decided that when they returned to school they would write about the trip for their class newspaper. Having plans made ahead helped them know what to look for on the trip.

In the same school, a first grade studied about people who helped the community. Teacher and children decided on the people to study and the order in which they would be studied. In an eighth grade in the same city, boys and girls and their teacher made a list of things they wanted to know in the field of science. They discussed responsibilities of different groups, ways of study, where to look for information, and ways of presenting to the class the things learned. Then they proceeded to work on their plans systematically from day to day.

Planning adds continuity.—Continuity of experiences between grades is strengthened by teacher-pupil planning. A certain Wisconsin school is especially successful with a continuous program. The school is small, the teachers like their work, and the teacher turnover is slight. These things mean that the staff can work and plan well together. Unnecessary duplication from year to year is largely eliminated. The children's progress is continuous. In the first three grades the primary unit plan gives the children a good foundation in fundamental skills.

A Rhode Island city contemplates a continuous program which is described by a supervisor as follows: Each child will be allowed to progress through the primary grades at his own rate of learning. In order to make this possible, reading levels will be established through which the child will progress step by step or level by level. During the child's first year these levels will replace the traditional grades. At the beginning of the second year, the pupil will continue where he left off the previous year. There will be no failures or repetition. Each child will move ahead. By the time a child has finished 3 years in school beyond the kindergarten, he will be expected to have completed a certain number of levels in reading. For some children it may take more than 3 years. An enriched program will be planned for all children who work rapidly.

What Happens in Groups at Work

In many schools children were observed working in groups in which they could make progress themselves and contribute to the progress made by others. Grade and age groups are least flexible. Attempts to organize smaller groups within grade or age structures were observed. When small groups are formed within the standard grade or age groups, the rows of children are replaced by many small groups working in clusters, with desks or seats around small tables or just moved together. Here are some of the things that happen in schools observed.

Children learn from one another.—Look in on pupils in a fourth grade in Alabama as they study clothing. In one group, five girls are making aprons, each according to an individual pattern. The members of another group are cutting out pictures from a mail order catalog, and pasting them on sheets of paper with such questions as: What season of the year are these clothes for? Would children wear these clothes every day? Other groups are planning questions for study, writing stories about some phase of clothing,

or reading for information. An older boy is reading a book of about sixth-grade difficulty, and an older girl is using an encyclopedia.

After half an hour, the children move their chairs into a large informal group for exchange of information and ideas. Some children report on what they have read, the pupils in the sewing group tell what they have done, and other groups mention questions not yet answered. By appropriate comments, encouraging words, and brief questions, the teacher unobtrusively leads the children to take stock of achievements or improvements and to plan ahead. In helping the pupils understand and see the usefulness of the study, the teacher frequently refers to their own experiences, to the clothes they wear on different occasions, and to the uses they make of wool, silk, and other materials.

A group of children in a Missouri fifth grade has an aquarium. The children are greatly interested in the hatching of some fish eggs. Another group grows a variety of vegetables in a large sand box. Once the children prepared a salad luncheon using their own vegetables and serving crackers with them. As groups and as individuals the pupils exchange experiences and learn from one another.

Each group contributes to a common problem.—In a Rhode Island sixth grade, 5 different groups were working on certain phases of State history, in a way of working that was also observed in other schools. One group was studying about Roger Williams, another about Anne Hutchinson. The pupils were using several books to get the information they needed. One was a rare book printed in 1850 that had been lent to them. They were writing a play based on the facts they discovered. The group working on Anne Hutchinson had first jotted informal notes as they came from their reading. Now they were writing a play.

Anne Hutchinson

- ACT I. Massachusetts Bay Colony
 SCENE I. In Anne's Home
 SCENE II. The Trial
 SCENE III. Banishment
- ACT II. Founding of Aquidneck
 SCENE I. Welcome by Roger Williams
 SCENE II. In Anne's Home
 SCENE III. Death of Anne's Husband
- ACT III. In Pelham, New York
 SCENE I. Anne's New York Home
 SCENE II. Indian Massacre

Informal classrooms are most effective for group work.—Most teachers feel that children work best in groups when the classroom is informally arranged, preferably with chairs and movable desks or tables. Some teachers, however, help children work in informal groups, even with formal seating and stationary desks. In a formally seated seventh-grade classroom in Massachusetts,



Grouping for learning. Hammond, Ind.

the children worked across aisles in groups of four. They brought three small tables and chairs into the room. They had been working on the problem of our relations with countries in Asia that are played up in the newspapers today; especially Korea, China, Japan, and India. They found it necessary to learn where the countries are located, how their people live and are governed, and why there are temporary difficulties in our relations with any of them.

The children became interested in the lives of the people and in the craft products that are sold in the United States. On the morning referred to, several committees were at work. Some were arranging displays of articles brought from home, such as costumes, baskets, painted plates, and ceramics. One committee was coloring a large poster designed to represent an oriental rug. They

had held a number of meetings at the home of one of the girls to work out the design and decide on the colors. In another part of the room, a small group was studying the steps of an original dance. Three children were making export charts, and three others were working on a large product map of Asia. The pupils were enthusiastic about the study and appeared to grow more friendly and cooperative through working together, while their reading and study increased their understanding of people of other countries and their desire to do their part in extending world understanding.

Arrangement of the classroom in many of the schools observed depended on the teacher and the children. If there is any characteristic that can be said to be common, it is that the most modern classrooms are informal at least part of the time. A visitor in a Rhode Island first-year classroom saw the following arrangement designed to enable children to help one another both in assignments and in independent work while the teacher is busy with others. In the group are five flexible reading levels. Children are moved from one to another as their needs or interests change. A variety of interest centers at which children can work when they wish are arranged as follows:

- (a) *A table with the label, DO YOU WANT HELP?* Various children choose or are assigned to work at this table at different times during the day to act as helpers in reading. This center is usually well patronized. One of a pair of twins said to a visitor: "I help my sister with reading, and she helps me with writing."
- (b) *A numbers table.* Children can work here with various concrete materials, such as disks, blocks, and marbles to improve recognition of number and number combinations.
- (c) *A games table.* Here are games of all sorts that children choose to work with individually or with partners.
- (d) *A materials center.* Here children make things out of paper, clay, wax, wood, or sawdust and glue.
- (e) *A painting center.* In this are two easels, both sides usable, where children can paint on newsprint, wrapping paper, or cloth.
- (f) *A science table.* Here a turtle was placed in a box. On a chart above the box was an experience story telling how the turtle had come to their room. Children came to this table to exchange ideas, look, and take notes for study.
- (g) *A COME AND WRITE corner on the blackboard.* Here children are given help in practicing the writing of words that cause them difficulty. Here, too, is a pupil helper.

Evaluating Group Work

In large groups and in small groups, children learn to evaluate their work together. Some teachers try to guide pupils so that each catches his own mistakes and corrects them while work is going on instead of after it is completed. This procedure brings each child greater satisfaction in the long run than having teacher and class point out his errors after his work is done. When work is finished, the emphasis on evaluation is turned toward what can be done to make the next similar production better. In other words, prevention of error is worth more than correction. When pupils begin activities, some teachers help them set up standards as guides and then call attention to these while the work is being done as well as at the end.

In Alabama and Texas some schools develop charts like the following and keep them on the bulletin board where anyone can read them at any time:

TO HAVE A GOOD WORK PERIOD

- Begin work on time
- Keep voices low when working in groups
- Make notes carefully when reading for information
- Share material with others
- Stick to the assignment until it is finished
- Do as little talking and moving about as possible
- Keep in mind ideas for future plans

TO HAVE A GOOD DISCUSSION

- Everyone takes part
- Keep to the subject being discussed
- Speak clearly and loudly enough for all to hear
- Give all a chance to talk
- Talk one at a time
- Keep questions until the speaker has finished
- Welcome questions and helpful suggestions
- Disagree politely

Deciding on standards together helps prepare pupils to evaluate and keep their work of a quality that pleases them. For example, a Georgia fourth grade discussed with their teacher: "What makes a good picture?" These are the items they considered important:

- A good background
- Balance of dark and light colors
- Big people
- Action in the picture
- Fill up the space
- Have many objects
- Make all parts interesting (with lots of action)

Among ideas that some schools apply in helping children learn through working in groups are the following:

- (a) *Seating is flexible. Movable tables and chairs are used. These make it possible for children in each group to plan and confer face to face with a minimum of confusion.*
- (b) *Mechanics of grouping is simple. Groups are small. Membership is usually temporary and flexible. Small groups work independently of the teacher better than large groups. They give pupils who need it the experience of getting acquainted with different children. A member of an ability or interest group may be moved into another ability group when the teacher feels that he will be benefited socially or emotionally by the move. In some situations, as in a primary progress unit in the first three grades, a child moves gradually from one grade to another without general break in the continuity of his progress.*
- (c) *Teachers and children sometimes decide upon rules and practices together. Thus a number of groups can learn to work in a room at one time without disturbing one another. In this way a child can get the feeling of controlling his environment. He learns to think about the comfort or wishes of others. He begins to see how he can make a contribution in getting a job done.*
- (d) *In the elementary school, the trend is toward having grade or age groups taught by one teacher for all or most of the subjects; that is, the single-teacher class is a matter of policy. None of the schools visited use the departmental plan in toto; two or three are using it for certain grades and some use it for special subjects, largely because of situations that have grown up with the school system. Some school systems, for example, have teachers of special subjects on tenure, who do not feel secure enough to take over a single-teacher class.*

Children Working Independently

One of the biggest things a child learns in school is to plan and do his work independently when necessity demands. Nearly every day pupils have time in which they work independently of the teacher and of the other children. Independent periods are not times for play. In working by themselves, children complete assignments or responsibilities they have accepted, discover new interests, and find avenues of creativeness. Teachers in the schools observed plan definitely for the children to have worth-while independent periods that fit into the total program and round out each child's day. Below are some of the practices observed.

Assignments and Tasks

In all schools, children are expected to complete assigned tasks in their independent periods. They may, for example, have items to write for the school paper, be responsible for planning a school lunch menu, or be asked to prepare a report on a magazine article. Pupils who need practice in improving skills in reading, writing, or arithmetic use part of their independent periods for this work. Teachers guide pupils in their assignments. Many teachers make assignments and expect the pupils to carry them out. In a number of schools, however, pupils are encouraged to help decide on their own assignments.

Teachers try to see that each child is developing in the way most appropriate for him. John, for example, may tend to be too dependent. He asks for guidance from teachers or others more than should be necessary. Hoping to make him more independent, the teacher turn his attention first to things he can do with confidence, or she gets him to turn the tables and help others in ways of which he is capable. Mary may be too aggressive. The teacher guides her in learning how to help a younger child develop initiative. In all the children's independent work, the teacher tries to keep alert to the needs of individuals. It is by closeness and warmth of association that she comes to know how to help each one.

A good many of the schools visited are concerned about unwise and seemingly unlimited use of workbooks. Some have ceased to use them. They believe that workbooks generally discourage initiative and creativeness. A supervisor in one school writes thus: "The curriculum committee voted out workbooks in every grade but the first. First-grade teachers are encouraged to develop their own workbook activities when they are needed. In art, patterns

are expected to be non-existent." Through workbooks used indiscriminately, some supervisors say, children sometimes have to repeat again and again skills they already have achieved. Some feel that workbooks demand teacher time and energy that could better be used in more educative ways. Some use workbooks only when specific needs can be served by them.

Hobbies, Diaries, and Favorite Work or Fun

Opportunities that foster creativeness arise when children are encouraged to choose activities they like. One spring, for example, the schools of a certain city centered their annual exhibit of children's work on the theme, "When Children Work Alone." The materials exhibited included handcraft objects built or made by individuals, diaries, paintings, original poetry and other creative writing, sketches, collections, and hobbies of different kinds. The purpose of the exhibit was to provide opportunity for pupils and teachers to share ideas and for parents to see what their children had done. The exhibit was left up for 3 weeks. A schedule was worked out to provide opportunities for children and teachers to visit it. The visiting was done after school on a voluntary basis. More than 600 teachers attended. Some returned several times. Many teachers and children said the exhibit gave them ideas to incorporate in their own programs.

In a city in Colorado, arrangements were made for children to choose individual activities in connection with long-time class projects. In a class study of the United States, for example, one boy chose to study soil. His work included making a soil map with little bottles of different types of soil attached to each State. He collected samples by writing and by traveling. He worked on his project largely during his independent periods.

Helping Others

Children often help one another when the teacher is busy. Pupils in a classroom in Indiana, for example, are working out ways of improving their ability in the tool subjects independently of the teacher. While the teacher works with small groups, other children help one another. Sometimes several good readers sit in with a group of slow readers and try to decide what the difficulties are and how each of the slow readers can improve his skill. When they can tell what kind of work is needed they give it. Free-choice reading and reading aloud to others are activities for the inde-

pendent period. In spelling, children pronounce words to one another. Now and then individuals list words they need to learn to spell in connection with work they are doing for projects and activities. The room arrangement described on page 38 is conducive to mutual helpfulness among pupils. The activities just described are not busy work. In each case the teacher has helped the children plan them so that their activities are part of the total program.

School Services

In many schools children are encouraged to perform services for the school. Such services are not always taken over by clubs and councils.

In some schools in Connecticut, New York, Texas, and other States, individual children take turns working in the library during certain independent periods, checking out reading books and receiving books returned to the library and keeping the records required.

In a Connecticut city, arrangements are made for some of the children's independent periods to be used for work for the school, such as mimeographing the school paper and announcements, making plans and practicing for school dramatics, giving service on or for the student council, or conferring with the guidance consultant. Appropriate planning for the use of independent periods for the dozens of activities in which boys and girls can engage makes it unnecessary for pupils to be taken from regular class activities.

In a Wisconsin school the sixth grade takes care of younger children while their mothers attend school meetings. In this school, upper-grade pupils hold themselves responsible for contributing to lower grades whenever programs of the younger pupils can be enriched in this way. A sixth-grade girl who visited Mexico, for example, once sat in with fifth-grade pupils while they planned a study of Mexico, gave them information, and helped them decide on activities and select reference books and other good reading about Mexico.

In a South Carolina school where the children's help is needed, the boys and girls do most of the work around the school except fire the furnace. The children help organize and assign the work they do. Children who clean the toilet rooms are paid. All other work is considered a regular responsibility and is shared by the children as part of the work expected of them in keeping their school a good place to study, work, and live. They have great pride

in the way the school and grounds look. The mill in the community sends men to do repair work upon request.

In some Oklahoma and Alabama schools, sixth-grade children mend broken toys and make new ones for the first grade, help younger children with their overshoes, and help check out books from the library to boys and girls who wish to read at home.

Other school services carried on by children in schools of different States include taking down the flag; arranging flowers for entrance hall, classroom, and auditorium; caring for a flower bed on the school grounds; checking in supplies; distributing milk. Through all such services, if not carried to excess, children learn the ways and attitudes of being good citizens. They need the teacher's guidance and help in planning and evaluation. They gradually learn to work independently of her at other times.

Children learn gradually to take individual responsibility for their work and actions during independent periods. In a good many schools, the boys and girls have developed enough sense of responsibility for the teacher to let them move about as they wish, plan and exchange materials with other pupils, go on errands, get drinks and go to toilets and lavatories, and clean up the space about their desks when the period is over. Working independently, children develop a sense of group responsibility.

Practices useful in helping children work alone with profit include the following:

- (a) *Children are provided with an environment that includes plenty of clay, paints, and crayon for art and handicrafts, books on many subjects and easy reading levels, materials to encourage cooking and sewing, samples of handicrafts done by other pupils, and books that tell how to make or do things of interest.*
- (b) *Children of the classroom as a whole are led to see the importance of planning ways of working during independent periods. In this way pupils learn not to disturb classmates by frequent questions or by too much talking.*
- (c) *Teachers arrange for periods when the children can report to the large group on their independent projects and see how their work fits into the total program or ask for help from teachers or classmates.*
- (d) *Teachers coach children who help others in order*

that pupils who are taking the initial steps in skills may be guided in learning correct methods.

- (e) Teachers and children plan time schedules for work for the school, such as assisting the librarian, helping on the playground, taking part in dramatics, answering the telephone, or receiving visitors.
- (f) Preliminary discussions of the class as a whole and conferences between teacher and individual pupils provide children with plans. Independent periods are most successful when each child has a specific job and knows how it fits into his group's total program.



The fruits of his toil, Indian Springs School, Columbus, Ohio

Student Councils

Schools organize student councils with varying degrees of benefit to the children. In some schools, the council appears to confine its efforts to activities that are merely remedial, such as policing halls and study groups to maintain order, keeping scraps of paper off the playground, and checking on tardiness. Such councils may have value, but not as much as the councils that have more constructive programs. Some of the latter are the outgrowth of teacher's study of children's developmental needs and real problems. Councils with constructive programs seem to be in keeping with modern theories of child development, and results can be seen in improved practices and attitudes of the pupils. Following are examples of council activities with emphasis on purpose, kinds of activity, organization, and results.

Purposes of Student Councils

A school in Connecticut, which seems fairly typical, states the purpose of its student council thus: To unify students and faculty and help promote the welfare of the school. A school in Indiana has a student council that systematically provides for cooperative services to school or community and draws children together in their planning. Before this school had such a student council a spirit of competition had developed. Children seemed to work against one another more than they worked together. They tended, for example, to work for better records than others, to study to make higher grades than others, to take part in competitive types of recreation, to try for awards, and to enter school contests. Too few school activities were drawing children together in their planning and their study. Even when groups were formed for projects, the children had a tendency to pit themselves one against another. After studying the situation, teachers and principal decided to sponsor more activities that would draw pupils together and began by introducing the student council idea.

A Maryland bulletin says student councils should provide for: (1) Experience in solving problems democratically; (2) cooperation between staff and pupils; (3) cooperation between school and community; (4) community service; and (5) all-round development of individuals.

Kinds of Activity

One of the activities of the first planning committee of one council was to study the dismissal plan of the school and recommend

interesting activities for children who remain in school after some have gone home in the afternoon.

Other activities carried on by this council include cooperating with parent-teacher groups on paper sales to raise a fund for use in the school; arranging for a trained student committee to take steps to keep the movie projector in good condition and to take charge of the projector when films are shown; maintaining a Service Girls' Club of eighth-grade girls to assist teachers occasionally, to substitute for teachers who must be absent from the building for short times, or to take charge of rooms until substitute teachers arrive; maintaining a traffic club of seventh- and eighth-grade boys to check on bicycle safety and other traffic problems. The club also arranged for students to be on call to help teachers with such activities as banking milk money, keeping ledger and accounts for milk money, answering the telephone, attending to certain library duties, and working out ways of making the building more attractive. The council has a coordinated program, a constitution, and systematic ways of working adapted to the requirements of the school's total program.

The student council in a Maryland school prepares a council newspaper called *Pupil Council News*; sponsors a poster display on good manners; carries on a "litter bug" drive aimed at keeping school grounds free of paper and other litter; and with their sponsor, has charge of school banking. In a New York school, each room is represented on the Council and also sponsors a younger class. Representatives of the council report council news to younger pupils. This council also is well organized, has a constitution, and is a recognized part of the total school program.

Student councils also sponsor school activities in which all grades have a part. In one school, the student council with the teacher sponsor has complete charge of the annual Old Home Day celebration in town. A feature of the occasion is a parade of floats representing each graduating class in the history of the school. Parents and other adult citizens take part upon invitation from the council. Results are the community's increased interest in the school and the children's increased community spirit and civic consciousness.

Some school systems, such as the one in a certain Missouri town, have an organized program of student council activities that cut across grades. These activities are placed in charge of committees who are responsible for such duties as school safety, helpful and interesting noon hours, cafeteria duties, and lunchroom activities for children who bring lunches from home. School pride is

exemplified in the appearance of school grounds, the conduct and achievements of the children, and the appearance of halls and corridors of the building. School sportsmanship is shown through activities of yell leaders and pep assemblies. The council arranges for children to conduct games and auditorium and stage activities. Children have charge of lost and found articles. The council helps plan social and recreational affairs, arranges for pupils to help in the school library and with motion pictures.

The student council in a Massachusetts school asks all classes in school to make and display posters on safety, and each year takes charge of a play day, a clean-up day, and a candy and ice cream sale for the school. These activities have been helpful in developing interracial understanding in the school, which is in a neighborhood of both white and Negro families.

In a North Dakota school, the student council helped with ar-



Games are fun and provide training in leadership for boys and girls, Hammond, Ind.

rangements and practice for a spring music festival or pageant called "Salute to Our Home State and Our Home Town." The school staff hoped that through the pageant children might develop increased love and respect for their native land through increased understanding of their home State and city. As a result, all grades, classes, schools, and community groups are closer together in civic aims and spirit.

In an Oklahoma school, the student council is primarily respon-

sible for the safety patrol throughout the school. The older girls help supervise games at recess and help keep younger children in the proper play areas. Patrol boys help people cross the walks, retrieve balls, and place traffic signs at street intersections.

In a Connecticut school, the student council was instrumental in carrying out a soil erosion project in which the boys and girls filled in and grassed a path which had been cut by students and citizens across the corner of the school ground and a neighbor's lawn. In an Illinois school, the council has a part in planning for outdoor classrooms, fireplaces, and gardens; sponsors a clean-up campaign and makes a report to the mayor; and plans square dancing parties with "squares" for children as well as adults.

In at least two schools in Oklahoma, the primary responsibility of the student council is school safety. In one of these, the older girls assist in supervising games at recess and help keep younger pupils in the proper play areas. Older boys constitute a safety patrol. They place traffic signs at certain street intersections and aid young children in crossing walks and in retrieving balls that have rolled into dangerous play areas.

In a school in Kansas where the work of a student council is limited temporarily to safety, the council is responsible for bicycle safety, including activities to teach pupils the facts about bicycle hazards as well as safety. All the schools in town are included. The work is done in cooperation with the city traffic department. It is believed that as a result of the campaign during the past year all the children who ride bicycles to school have successfully passed a safety examination and have had their bicycles licensed.

In a city in Massachusetts where the council has charge of school safety, the children place signs in the neighborhood of the school to help pupils recognize safety hazards. All classes make posters calling attention to things the children consider to be safety hazards. The council meets with the regular student safety patrols and reports to representatives of classrooms on measures the patrols think important.

Organization and Sponsorship

The basic organization of student councils appears to be about the same in all schools. One Maryland council, which is probably typical in this respect, has a president, a vice president, secretary, and representatives from each class. Committees are appointed by this group for special projects and disbanded when their work is done. A Massachusetts school provides opportunities for the chil-

dren to get council experience by organizing a council in each classroom as a branch of the main student council.

In the school just mentioned, a sample business meeting of the student council included a report and a discussion of unfinished business. Then the group took up the new business and the work of that particular meeting. The business of the meeting was to plan for the election of new officers for the year. The children were concerned with how to get nominations made, how to get them before the school to be voted on, and how to get the children acquainted with the nominees.



Patrol boys and girls explaining a study of school safety, Hammond, Ind.

All the councils visited have faculty or staff supervisors or sponsors. Whereas the members of the student council are usually selected with a view to giving many children opportunities to participate, the staff advisers are sometimes selected for certain qualifications. For example, one school system publishes a handbook to guide students and staff advisers in their work on the council. The following excerpt from a Maryland school bulletin shows the qualifications desired in staff advisers:

1. Interest in student organizations

An important requisite for advisers of student council organizations is a strong desire for the improvement and enrichment of school life.

This desire on the part of the advisers should be based upon a sincere conviction that problems of school life are best solved and activities are best carried on by means of the active participation of pupils in student organizations.

2. Willingness to work

The success of student council organizations bears a direct relationship to the amount of time and quality of effort expended by advisers in furthering student programs in the school. Participation in pupil planning activities, preparation of materials, coordination of action, evaluation of programs, and attendance at committee meetings are some of the activities which are the advisers' responsibilities.

3. Ability to work well with children

It is essential that the faculty sponsors be individuals whom the pupils like and respect. They should have enthusiasm and evidence an earnest desire to work with children. As in the case of all teachers, they should be alert to the personalities, abilities, interests, and needs of the individuals within the council by stimulating, guiding, and enriching pupils' experiences.

In one Oklahoma school system, the student council is primarily organized to coordinate school activities that are selected by the different rooms to be carried on through the year. A list of primary responsibilities in one school follows:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| First grade | The work includes reading the weather report, and putting out the green flag to indicate fair weather and the red flag for bad weather. When the green flag is out the children know they can play outdoors. |
| Second grade | This group carries on a bulb-planting project. |
| Third grade | The children take up absence slips and help teachers report sickness and other absences. |
| Fourth grade | These children run a parking lot for bicycles and clean paper and other litter off the school yard. |
| Fifth grade | This group edits the school newspaper. |

Children's Appraisal

When members of student councils are asked what they get out of the experience, their replies run somewhat as follows:

Q. Do you think your student council has helped the school?

A. I remember when the council talked about helping new pupils to feel at home. I think our council helped some of them.

A. I think our student council has helped the school because the representatives make reports to their classes. The reports give the other children ideas.

A. It is nice to get acquainted with boys and girls who are older or younger than we are.

A. Our council helps us have safe playgrounds.

A. When our school has programs and exhibits, our council helps.

Q. What do you think you get out of being on the council?

A. I used to be afraid to talk to a group, or even in class. Now I can talk. I am still afraid, but not so much. Today I can tell you how I feel about the council.

A. I have made new friends through the council. Before I was elected to the council, I had just a few friends to play with. Mostly they live in the neighborhood where I live. Sometimes I thought, I wish I had someone to play with. In the council I get acquainted with children who live in other blocks.

A. It feels good to do something useful, like helping with the school exhibit. In the council I have more opportunities to do such things.

Student councils contribute to the all-round program for the development of children in several ways:

- (a) *A student council may be initiated to solve a specific problem or it may have general cooperation and school unity as its aims.*
- (b) *Student councils help children increase their ability to work together smoothly, to conduct business meetings with more ease, and to talk to a group with greater ease and effectiveness; to extend their circle of playmates or friends and to learn to know and to work with children with whom they might otherwise have few contacts; and to feel satisfaction and achievement in giving service to the school.*
- (c) *Student councils that have a constructive program seem to promise more developmental experiences for children than those that are merely remedial, although the stage of development of teachers and children in good educational practices must be considered in selecting experiences.*
- (d) *Most of the schools work for a student council organization that affords the greatest number of children the most opportunities to participate.*
- (e) *Service to the school is the major goal of most of the council members.*

School Clubs

In a few of the schools visited, boys and girls organize clubs to provide opportunities for children interested in the same or similar things to work together and to have more social activities than they otherwise would have. School clubs are more homogeneous groups than school councils. A club usually consists of members who are interested in a single subject, such as birds or art. Any school can have enough clubs for every child to belong to at least one. The membership of a council in any school is too restricted for every child to be a member. The major goal is to promote the welfare of the school, whereas the goal of a school club is more likely to be personal interest or satisfaction. Some school student councils have a supervisory relation to the school clubs as in certain Maryland and Massachusetts schools where clubs operate under the student council.

Variety of Interests

Among the more common school clubs are the Junior Audubon Clubs, garden clubs, science clubs, art clubs, and Junior Conservation Clubs. Others include:

Newspaper club
Folk dance club
Hobby club
Handcraft club
Junior Red Cross
Book club
Stamp club

Little theater club
Dramatics club
Pen pals
Poetry club
Teen-age club
Good breakfast club
Sewing club

In a Wisconsin city are several of the clubs listed above. In the clubs in these schools, older children work with younger boys and girls, help them find interests, and decide on things to do. In this city, the Teen-Age Club is the only one whose members are limited to the older children. Among the problems that the teenagers discuss are: "How do you get people to like you?" "Should kids our ages hold hands in the movies?" "Should we be allowed to go out on week nights?" "How late should kids our ages stay out?" Each club has its own chairman and secretary.

An over-all council provides general guidance and correlates club activities. The chairman of the council is selected by the student body.

All-Year Clubs

An Ohio school system arranges for pupils who wish to have garden activities either on the school ground or in their own

yards. Objectives of the program are improvement of leisure-time activities, promotion of worth-while hobbies, and the beautifying of garden and lawns. The general plan is for the principal of one of the schools who is particularly interested to have charge of the garden project. Garden clubs are organized in the separate schools and are usually composed of members from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Each school is expected to choose a garden sponsor. During 1 year, garden clubs were organized in 67 elementary and junior high schools, and 3,033 children were registered. The largest club had 107 members, the smallest 10 members.



These dogs are guests of the school hobby club, Fort Wayne Ind. Children learn to care for them. They will be returned to their owners.

Garden club activities are kept up during the summer under the supervision of the garden director. Summer programs include garden hikes, garden exhibits, and visits from the school sponsor to gardens in each school district. Home gardens receive special emphasis. In some homes of low economic level, home gardens under the sponsorship of the school have added greatly to family food supplies.

Community Influences on Clubs

In a certain city, a sixth grade has a student group known as "The Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn Club" with regularly

elected officers and the usual election campaign activities. Among other activities of the club are a literary program presented to the sixth grade or the school by a small group of sixth-grade children, Junior Red Cross work, and responsibility for the central library of the entire school. The school also has glee clubs. The groups give plays, talks, and musical numbers for social and civic groups interested in such activities, as well as for school groups. Other schools, too, have clubs adapted to local needs and resources. In one community, where adults have a hobby group, the children also have hobby clubs. In a city with facilities for swimming, elementary grades have a swimming club. In a rural school, a bird club flourishes.

Generally speaking, school clubs add interest and worth to the school program by providing means for:

- (a) *Interesting activities for leisure time.*
- (b) *Development of interests that sometimes carry through life and enrich the character and personality of the individual.*
- (c) *Enriched opportunities for boys and girls to learn how to work with others who are interested in the same field of activity and thus to gain stimulation from one another.*
- (d) *Opportunities for boys and girls to work with children who are younger or older, as when clubs, such as bird clubs, include children from many or all grades or classes.*
- (e) *Opportunities to give coordinated service to one's school, neighbors, or social group.*



3

THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

In many of the schools visited, children have the curriculum that helps them with the problems of everyday life. New lessons are selected to fit real problems. Consequently, the children learn and study in natural situations. Sometimes the subject matter children use has been organized in fields of science, social studies, and language arts; sometimes as areas of experience, such as home living, conservation, community life, and world understanding. One supervisor says, "We have passed through different stages of curriculum development." This is the order she gave:

1. The subject as a dominant center in a textbook curriculum.
2. A subject-matter curriculum, one step removed from the textbook curriculum.
3. A curriculum with different subjects integrated or correlated.
4. The "broad field" curriculum, as in the case of reading, writing, and spelling being grouped as language arts.
5. The core curriculum, with centers such as home life, conservation, or managing money, planned for all children.
6. The experience curriculum centered about the real problems and experiences of particular groups and individuals.

As a convenience for reporting in this bulletin, activities and practices that visitors describe are grouped as follows:

- Developing Understanding and Skill in Reading
- Learning To Write and To Spell
- Using Numbers
- Learning How To Be Well and Safe
- Using Science Meaningfully
- Improvement of Social Understanding and Experience
- Enjoying Creative Expression

Within this grouping are suggested specific practices observed by the visitors. Many schools follow such practices. This report does not represent a total program followed by any school in particular. Neither does it describe all the good practices observed. An attempt has been made to include examples of the experience type of learning from all States, but not necessarily from all schools. Techniques of teaching that are determined by published courses of study, handbooks, and textbooks are not included here. In teaching fundamental skills, most schools work toward such objective norms as have been established by standard tests.

Developing Understanding and Skill in Reading

Most children in literate societies such as ours are so conditioned by their environment that learning to read has a prestige value to them. If they fail to read when most of their playmates read, they become emotionally disturbed, either because their parents are disturbed or because the school or home has seemed to expect them to read at a certain time. One of the more modern practices in the skills of reading and of other school subjects is to help children to learn them meaningfully when they have a use for them and are mature enough to learn them. In no school did observers have time to see a total reading program. They did see children using a great many reading skills, getting pleasure from reading, and making use of a variety of reading materials. Incidents observed follow:

Getting Ready To Read

Each school has its own way of helping children learn to attack and recognize new words and to read fluently and with understanding. Primary teachers generally follow these principles: That children develop a readiness for learning to read, not as a group, but as individuals; that many play-type experiences contribute to reading readiness; that careful study needs to be made of each child's progress.

In a Utah class, for example, each pupil was observed reading in a different place in a pre-primer or from a different pre-primer. The teacher had a record of each child's progress. While some children worked with the teacher in their pre-primers, other children were engaged in self-selected activities: digging at the sand table, painting on the floor, reading, matching words to pictures, putting cut-out calendar numbers in order to make a calendar, putting a jig-saw puzzle together, and working in clay. In one case, two children sat together at the back of the room reading aloud to each other, each one helping the other. As the teacher changed reading groups, a visitor asked her about the absorption of the two children who were reading together and she said: "Those two were slow in the beginning, but I decided not to push them. Instead, I encouraged them to do other things. About 3 days before Christmas, they came up to watch one of the reading groups. I asked, 'Do you want a book of your very own?' 'Yes,' they said. After a bit I gave them a start in a pre-primer. Up to now (January 16) they have read several pre-primers. They can't stop reading."

The teacher explained further that to some children who had shown signs of reading readiness she had given daily help and had "pressured them a bit, just to experiment with the pressure idea." These children were not making such good progress as the other two and were not so much interested.

"I am changing my ideas about teaching reading," she said. "I've decided to provide rich non-reading experiences for the children and let them move at their own speed."

After a reading group had finished, the teacher said, "We'd better clean up now."

At once the children started to put things away: the clay, the paint, the books, the toys. As they finished, they came to sit on the rug in the front of the room.

"Somebody needs to rearrange the clay table," said the teacher, and immediately "somebody" did so.

"Can you move the table so it is even?" she asked, and the children pushed the table until every leg was even. Then they came and sat with the others.

"Now let's make our calendar for the week," said the teacher.

As the teacher wrote the word Wednesday on a chart the children spelled it with her, "W-E-D-N-E-S—you can spell day."

A voice, "D-A-Y!"

"Find Wednesday on the calendar. Today is the middle Wednesday—what number is it?"

"Sixteen."

"Year?"

"1952."

"Read it."

Linda, one of the two presumably slow readers, read it rapidly: "Wednesday, January 16, 1952."

They began to dictate news. Samples of news on other days written on the blackboard in manuscript writing include:

A chart:

Monday, January 14, 1952

For four days we have all been at school.

Sickness must be over for our room.

Dawn's dog lost a tooth.

Cheryl's sister, in Germany, had an operation.

Nearly all of us have some teeth loose.

Another chart:

Let's Name Our Doll

"Susie," said Susan.

"Kathryn," said Charlie.

"Rita," said Anna May.

"Veda Ann," said Karlen.

"Judy," said Garth.

"Marilyn," said Marcellus.

"Linda," said Mary Anne.

"Elizabeth," said Christine.

"Marian," said Baird.

"We will name her Judy," said most of us.

Reading About Our Own Experiences

One of the means that most of the teachers use in helping boys and girls develop a readiness for reading at different stages is to give them opportunities to read about their own experiences. The purpose of the activity is to strengthen their understanding that reading is getting ideas. Here is the way one Alabama first grade worked.

The children were intensely interested in some ducks that one boy owned. He brought one of the ducks to school each day for the children to enjoy. The boys and girls covered a corner of the floor with newspapers and built a house of blocks on them. They

put the duck into the house, and he seemed quite at home and willing to stay. One day the teacher helped them make up a story about the ducks, as follows:

We have three baby ducks.

One is named Puff.

The ducks are at Joey's house.

One is named Spot.

One is named Tom.

The teacher gave the pupils opportunities to read and reread the story for different purposes, such as: (1) finding the part that tells something; (2) recognizing names and comparing them with the names of people and other pets; and (3) deciding whether to include the chart in their collection of favorite chart stories to be read for fun from time to time.

In a third grade in the same school, experience reading is continued at an appropriate level through a daily blackboard newspaper. From the children's dictation, the teacher wrote stories of interesting events that happened to the boys and girls each day. In this collection, items that the children reread were about exciting trips, interesting class or school visitors, school parties, and outdoor fun. Iowa and Louisiana schools also were observed using blackboard and chart newspapers.

Reading for a Specific Purpose

One of the commonest of good practices observed was children reading for information needed for one of their activities or to answer a question. Many teachers appear to be trying to avoid reading merely for practice. When children read, they do it for a purpose; and they read often. As a result, many children are having opportunities to discover by reading that books have information for them, information that is interesting and that will help them to do the thing they want to do or to understand something that has baffled them. For example, there are the South Dakota children reading to learn more about the flowers of their community—reading and looking at pictures and comparing them with the real flowers; the Ohio children studying about agricultural wealth of South Africa, which they had once thought to be rich only because of its diamonds; the Kentucky children in a rural school reading about strawberry growing which they wanted to develop as a means of raising money.

In the third grade of a Massachusetts school, it is the job of the pupils to receive the school mail, glance at the letters, and put them in different piles for the teachers. Different committees attend to this work from week to week, learning through this practical experience that knowing how to read is important.

An Oklahoma second grade had a project called "Cookie Making." As part of this project, they prepared a lunch for their parents. The plan involved studying recipes, learning how to spell certain words, deciding what kind of cookies to make, and finally making the cookies. In addition to reading, the project gave the children experience in using spelling and arithmetic.



The blind man and the elephant. Learning that clear thinking means seeing all sides of a problem, Tucson, Ariz.

Reading for Pleasure and Appreciation

That children are reading for pleasure is obvious from observations by many of the visitors. Children crowded around a bookmobile in Kentucky looking over books to which the teacher called their attention, trying to decide which ones to check out to take home for themselves and whether or not certain other books were the ones their parents wanted. Children in Connecticut returned library books to one of the neighborhood mothers who was helping receive books for the week, and asked if they might take others their teacher or a pupil had recommended for use in school or at home. North Dakota children were encouraged to take home for reading, if they wished, not their textbooks, but interesting supplementary books suggested by the teacher.

When encouraged to do so, children gradually learn to find pleasure in reading and to appreciate literature. Third-grade children in the school referred to above sometimes gather around the

teacher and she reads familiar poems that are favorites with the children or new poems that she thinks the children will enjoy. On a wall chart is a list of favorite poems to which the boys and girls add titles from day to day. On another chart the boys and girls write the names of books they like. A Vermont teacher in oral reading now and then calls the children's attention to colorful expressions in a story or asks them to look for turning points in the narrative. They discuss ways in which the author creates atmosphere.

A California school helps children form small groups when they read for pleasure or fun. The teacher encourages the children to read with the children they like to be with and to learn to know and to like more people. She believes that "To be with the people you want to be with makes a good feeling." She tells the children to think of ways of telling others about the books they have read as individuals. They consider telling about the stories, reading part of the stories, and dramatizing skits from the book. Once they decided that reading a part of the book was the least successful way of letting others know about it. "Telling about a book is better than reading, if you don't tell too much," one said. Teacher and children also work for tactful ways of evaluating the reading done in groups. Once they decided, for example, that it was a good idea for the chairman to ask a reporter such questions as:

What character appealed to you?

Did you think the book was true to life?

What do you think others in the group might like about the book?

Organizing Reference Materials

Skill in organizing reference materials helps anyone get more out of reading. In a library project in Colorado fourth-grade children collected and painted orange crates and apple boxes. Out of these the boys and girls make sections for books, arranged so as to form a nook apart from the main classroom. The material placed in the library consisted of textbooks, supplementary books, general information books and bulletins, children's current events papers, children's encyclopedias, books of fiction, and magazine articles, and exhibits. The boys and girls classified the materials and made cards, giving particular attention to materials on their State, Colorado, which they were studying at the time. They discussed ways of using the library and made rules for study and for borrowing books to use in the library or to take home. The activity

carried them into a study of the organization, care, and use of libraries and of audio-visual materials when available.

An eighth grade in Alabama that had helped select and order some supplementary reference books received the shipment early one morning. The class voted to postpone the work allotted to a social studies project that morning and to unpack and classify the books. From the new books, they expected to get information for the project under way. Besides, the children were eager to examine the books to see if they were all that had been hoped for. The pupils separated into small groups all over the room and each group took turns with a few of the books until all had had an opportunity to glance over most of the collection and either to put certain books aside or to sit for a while and read. After the examination, the pupils classified the books by subject, and a committee made catalog cards for them. In the junior high school of which the group just referred to is a part, one teacher teaches all or most of the subjects in each grade, just as in the elementary school. Consequently, teachers and pupils are free to work, as this class was doing, on centers of interest that draw on several subjects and to arrange the time of working to suit themselves each day.

A South Dakota sixth grade studied how to use the library in gathering information for reports. The boys and girls needed several types of information for one of their studies. Each pupil accordingly was made responsible for gathering information on a certain topic. They discussed different ways of getting information, such as asking people, taking a trip to get first-hand facts either through interviews with people who know or by observation, and consulting newspapers, magazines, books, and other publications. The library was a fine source of published information, so the teacher helped them make a plan for studying the use of the library, and went to the library with them. She and the librarian helped them learn how books are classified, how to use the card index, how to make call cards, and how to locate the subject in which they were interested.

Learning To Use an Encyclopedia

Fourth-grade pupils in a Maine school wanted answers to some questions that had been raised. They needed a source of information that was broader and richer than their textbooks. The teacher thought this would be a good time to introduce the encyclopedia. A set of children's encyclopedias of 15 volumes was brought into the room. The boys and girls saw that there were thousands of

pages of facts. They could see that it was going to be more difficult to find facts on any topic in the encyclopedia than it had been in their school readers, but that the encyclopedias had far more information. This time they knew that their readers and other textbooks did not have the answers, for they had carefully checked the table of contents and the index. In these big books with their thousands of pages, some new way of looking for facts would be of value.

The teacher passed a volume about the class so that each child could turn the pages and see what it was like. One child used the index volume to see whether there was anything on "public housing," which they were studying. The children then checked to see which volume contained the page numbers listed in the index. They tried one or two other items for practice, discussing discoveries as they went along, asking questions, seeing how an encyclopedia is different from an ordinary reference book or textbook. The teacher pointed out that each child would now know where the volumes of the encyclopedia were kept and could use them whenever he thought such books would help.

The South Dakota sixth grade referred to was observed looking up information in encyclopedias to compare with facts discovered in other books that the pupils thought were less reliable. When a pupil read a fact in an encyclopedia that had also been discovered in another book, he read to the class what the encyclopedia said, and the class discussed the agreement or disagreement in the two articles.

Learning To Use the Dictionary

Teachers help children from grades 4 through 6 to use a dictionary. This is done through direct instruction and incidentally.

In a fifth grade in North Dakota, the teacher was observed helping the children to alphabetize lists of spelling words. As a rule, the spelling words in this class are the ones the children will need to spell in letters, stories, notices, announcements, and other things they write in connection with their activities. If these words are derivatives of simpler words, the teacher calls the children's attention to this fact. Then she helps them check the spelling of the words in a dictionary and gets the meaning and pronunciation. Through this attention to words she hopes to prepare the children to use a dictionary independently.

Teachers in most schools help children learn to look up words quickly and get the information needed, whether it is the pronunciation, meaning, or spelling. In some schools, very young children use picture dictionaries.

Characteristics of reading programs observed here and there include the following:

- (a) *Boys and girls are reading with enjoyment at individual reading levels from materials about subjects in which they are interested.*
- (b) *Through a variety of materials, children's interests are being increased.*
- (c) *Through wise selection of materials and sympathetic guidance, children's curiosity is expanding.*
- (d) *Teachers see evidence that children are growing in the fundamental reading abilities including (1) mastery of techniques for quickly recognizing new words and groups of words, (2) ability to understand the meaning of words, (3) comprehension of passages read, (4) ability to locate information bearing on problems, and (5) ability to organize ideas in answer to questions or in solving problems.*
- (e) *Reading activities are closely associated with the the children's other school and home activities.*

Learning To Write and To Spell

In the schools visited, many children were observed learning to write legibly and spontaneously about something important to them and learning to spell in order to write. In addition to seeing that children have opportunities to use their spelling and writing, teachers follow the suggestions of good curriculum guides or textbook manuals. Below are examples of children using writing and spelling in situations that make sense to them.

Writing Letters

Pupils in a North Dakota city corresponded with boys and girls in a children's hospital in an Eastern State. The teacher of the boys and girls in the hospital sent them a letter in which the Eastern children had written about the birds on the hospital grounds. It was the beginning of a correspondence that led the North Dakota pupils to observe more closely the birds in their environment and that extended the Eastern children's interests in birds beyond their hospital grounds.

A sixth-grade class in Kansas had an important experience in writing to two sick classmates. They discussed the kinds of things they could write about appropriately in such letters. They talked about the form for writing friendly letters and referred to the textbook for facts they needed. When everyone had the information he needed, half the class wrote to one classmate and the other half wrote to the other classmate. The children also made a directory of the addresses of all the pupils in order that in the future various types of letters might be sent to classmates.

A California kindergarten group wished to write to a child who had been absent for some time. They dictated what they wanted to say to the teacher. She wrote it on the blackboard for them and said, "I will copy it on letter paper for you. Now you can make some pictures to put with it if you wish."

School Newspapers

A Massachusetts elementary school emphasizes the value of a school newspaper in which pupils are informed about what goes on in their school. Members of the newspaper staff in this school meet to evaluate papers previously "published" by them and to plan ahead for the remaining school months. Meetings of the newspaper staff are characterized by an exchange of ideas and a courteous, informal, and friendly give and take when differences of opinion arise. Every pupil in the school has an opportunity to contribute.

Through the paper, the children learn more than how to write legibly and spell correctly. They improve their use of parliamentary procedure. They discover the need for someone to act for the group, to carry out its decisions, and to lead discussions. Such work is assigned to the editor-in-chief. To a secretary is assigned the task of keeping a written record of decisions agreed upon in meetings.

To the children of this school their newspaper is not making believe. "They are in dead earnest," writes the chairman of the education planning committee of the school. Through their work on the newspaper the children see a purpose in the use of punctuation marks, capital letters, and correct spelling. They learn to appreciate good form in writing at the same time that they are encouraged to be original and sincere in what they write. Teachers in other schools report similar results. Some say that through participating in the "publication" of a school newspaper, children gain in poise and understanding in working with others and in ability to get along with others and to work in groups.

Efforts at Writing Poetry

Especially capable children in a Nevada eighth-grade class liked poetry and read and reread poems that appealed to them. One day they decided to try writing poems. Below is a poem from a collection of more than 60 that the teacher gathered from the class.

A WINTER SNOWFALL

The snow is falling slowly, softly, silently.
With each little snowflake the snow grows deeper.
The grayness of the sky blends with the whiteness of the snow.
The shrubs, bushes, and trees are dusted with snowflakes,
And all this makes a beautiful winter pattern.

Among considerations that appear to be thought important in learning to spell and to write are the following:

- (a) *Early opportunities to recognize words as such in observing the teacher write short stories or directions on the blackboard or chart.*
- (b) *Something important to write about.*
- (c) *Opportunities to write only a little at first, such as one's own name, then messages or statements as in the daily blackboard newspaper or a letter, then short stories, notes, and letters.*
- (d) *Guidance in using phonics, analyzing words, finding common endings and beginnings, forming derivatives, and in other ways becoming independent spellers.*
- (e) *Study of individual words without help, using a method that is acceptable and that will help children to help themselves.*

Using Numbers

Teachers in many of the schools that were observed try to have children use numbers in real situations with activities that make sense to them. Teachers try to give children experiences with numbers throughout the school day and not limit them to single short periods set apart for teaching about numbers abstractly. Opportunities occur for children to count the pupils in groups,

and to count the materials, supplies, and desks used. Boys and girls have opportunities to keep records; to look for page numbers and count pages in books; to tell time; to note the time used for school activities; and to take charge of mail, savings, and school banks. In higher grades pupils have opportunities to collect and manage school lunch money, earn money for trips, learn how to budget time and money, and to get experience and develop competence in using arithmetic in other real situations.

School Parties

When children entertain, they have experiences in using numbers. A third grade, planning a party for their mothers, made the following price list for supplies:

Chocolate cake mix—(2 boxes) 76¢	Milk 21¢
Vanilla ice cream—(38 servings) \$1.90	Napkins 20¢
Paper cups—(40) 10¢	

The children wrote the following invitation, which also involved use of numbers:

October 29, 1951

Dear Mother:

Could you come to our party Wednesday at two? Please give 25¢ to help pay for it.

Love,

School Stores

Activities with opportunities for children to work with numbers in real situations occur in connection with school stores. The make-believe store with its empty boxes and fake money is giving way to the cooperative store. The latter, as in some schools in Texas, Georgia, New York, and other States, is organized by the children with real items for children and real money. Sometimes these stores are open for business at noon, sometimes before school in the morning. Both rural and city schools use the idea, sometimes selling to parents in the neighborhood.

A New York State pupil group has charge of the school store. Each year the pupils prepare carefully for their task. In their preparation, some emphasis is on improving their reading, especially in locating and reading information to help them set up the store. But most of the emphasis is on arithmetic because to manage the store the boys and girls need to be good accountants. They need especially to know how to make change, to keep records, and

to make out bills. When they have learned these things to their satisfaction and to the satisfaction of the teacher, they open the store to the public (the pupils from other grades who wish to buy pencils, paper, erasers, shoestrings, and tooth paste). Profits are given to charity. One year \$15 was contributed to the March of Dimes. The pupils learn to write checks. The high-school commercial teacher helps them audit their books.

Each child keeps a store book. The entries in one child's store book read:

- Jan. 11, 1951 Jim Dunham and Lynn Mathers are clerks today. They took in \$5.00 today. Business was good this morning.
- Jan. 19, 1951 Ted and Billie are clerks now. They took in \$4.00 this morning. We will help the March of Dimes today.



Arithmetic makes sense and you can eat the results, Greenville, Miss.

The teacher helps the children count the money. One clerk has the money. The other clerk counts aloud. At the close of the day, the clerks plan for the commercial teacher to help them write checks. They looked in the store books for the amount taken in each day. They refer to their store books to answer the teacher's questions: Which day did we have the best business? Which day

did we have the poorest business? Which days did we take in an even number of dollars? When the teacher asks how much is taken in for the week, it takes discussion to get the amounts placed right for adding.

A second grade in Louisiana made a chart to show how much milk each child drank each day. Opposite each child's name was a series of squares. In each square was a picture of a bottle or bottles representing a quart, a pint, or a half-pint of milk. In this connection boys and girls studied measures. They labeled their bottles one quart, one pint, and one-half pint, according to capacity. They used a measuring cup to prove that two cups make one pint. Here was a use of arithmetic that made sense to the boys and girls.

A sixth grade in the same school used advertisements from daily newspapers to set up orders on grocery slips. They totaled the cost of the items on the slips. They developed menus that would make balanced diets for their families. In discussions, they considered the cost of different articles of food in relation to their food value. They ran some experiments with mold on food in order to emphasize the importance of proper care of food in the home. These activities provide further examples of ways in which children can learn arithmetic meaningfully.

Teaching Use of Numbers In School Situations

An example of teaching the use of numbers so that they make sense to children is the following from Kansas: The teacher asked the class to stand. She asked Robert to walk among the children and count them. The other children counted silently so that they would be able to help Robert if he needed help. Then she asked the boys to stand while Jane counted them. Next she asked individual children to bring to a long table a number of objects that the class would use for a game, including nine color sheets, ten crayons, and six name cards. Activities of this type are repeated until all the children have had an opportunity to count objects. An Oregon primary group talked over the attendance situation and planned for the attendance to be checked by a pupil regularly each morning and afternoon. Most of the schools use simple ways like this to make numbers meaningful to the children. It is an important step in teaching numbers. It is followed usually by opportunities for the children to practice the facts and computations that they do not learn well enough in the real situations to use automatically.

Computing Cost of Travel

In a Wisconsin school, the eighth grade takes a 2-day trip to Devil's Lake and Wisconsin Dells. The children earn their own money from sales of home-baked cakes, pies, and cookies, quiz shows, and assembly programs. Committees work on various aspects of the trip. The financial transactions lead to a study and use of banks: Last year's class earned enough money to pay the complete expenses of the class and to give \$100 to the school as a class gift. On the trip to Devil's Lake the children see a game farm, the lake, the dells, and a moraine. These are interesting things for study. In addition to the information that the children gather from their trips, they develop understanding of numbers through planning the trip, banking money, and paying the bills.

Another Wisconsin group, a seventh and eighth grade, take a bus trip to a nearby city. The first year this trip was taken the children sold magazines to raise enough money. They were so enthusiastic about the trip and the experience seemed so worth while that parents decided to urge the trip as part of the regular school program for seventh and eighth grades and to recommend that it be paid for out of school funds.

School Services

A Utah school uses experiences in giving service to the school as opportunities to make the children's use of numbers more meaningful. A junior high school girl, for example, helps the school clerk. Upper-grade children sell tickets for skits and plays produced by the school and the parent clubs. They have a hand in selecting and purchasing school equipment with the money made. They serve as cashiers in cafeterias, as in an Oregon school. All profits from such sales go into the school account. Sixth-grade boys and girls help the younger children learn games, record scores, divide into groups, and the like.

A sixth-grade group in a Missouri school used numbers with meaning in planning Christmas presents. They measured to find out, for example, how many luncheon mats would be made from a 125-foot roll of waxed paper if each mat required two 15-inch strips. They computed the cost per mat.

Children learn to use arithmetic in many ways that make sense to them. The following ideas seem to stand out in the programs of most of the schools visited:

- (a) Boys and girls have opportunities to take part in all real situations where numbers are used, as in counting books, materials, and chairs; following recipes in cooking; measuring materials in craft work; measuring and building playhouses big enough to play in; using pint and quart bottles and other measurements; counting change when they buy; and keeping scores in games.
- (b) Children take part in services for the school involving numbers, and learn and use the appropriate number skills.
- (c) Progress is evaluated frequently and individually. Children feel successful and happy because they are achieving skills and getting understanding that make sense to them.
- (d) Teachers make periodic checks to see whether the boys and girls are learning the number skills required for their grade or age level.
- (e) For children who need more teaching than the regular learning situations afford, teachers provide drill and practice in meaningful situations.
- (f) New skills are taught to the children in small groups by methods suggested by course of study, curriculum guide, or textbooks.

Using Science Meaningfully

Science is used to enrich many major activities and to help solve problems, in connection with which other subjects are also used. Some visitors report aquariums, terrariums, window gardens, outdoor gardens, collections of rocks and minerals, electric apparatus, magnets, and soil collections. Children study winds and weather and make observations and records. They study about rain and snow and the benefits of these to crops, trees, and flowers. They observe the stars. They listen to bird songs and calls. They make collections of newspaper and magazine articles on inventions, new cars, airplanes, radio, eclipses, and the stars. They read about new kinds of plants and new breeds of animals. They read and study about their pets and learn to take good care of them.

A Lesson on Bulbs

A Maryland fourth grade illustrates one way of working on a problem. On the science table were bulbs which the children had brought for study. The children suggested questions. The teacher wrote them on the blackboard. One question seemed most important and interesting to the children, and the class decided to take it up at once. It was: "How can these bulbs grow without soil or in a rock garden or ledge where there is very little soil?"

The teacher suggested that they might make some "guesses" about the answer and then see if they could prove any of their guesses. One of the children suggested that *food might be stored in the bulb*. That would provide for growth, she said. The teacher asked if there would be *any way of proving that food was stored in the bulb*.

"We could cut the bulb and look for food inside," said one.

"We could look in a book," said another.

"We might not know that the book is right," said one.

"We could do both things," said another. "We could cut the bulb in half and see if what we find in the bulb agrees with what the book says."

"I would hate to cut a bulb," said one. "It could be a flower."

"I don't think we need to worry about the bulbs we brought in," said a child. "They don't look very good."

"It says in the book," volunteered a girl, "that some bulbs like narcissus can be cut and they will grow anyway."

Still another child said, "We could use an onion."

"How would we know if what we see inside is food?" said one.

"We could also cut a bulb after it has grown awhile," said another.

Other discussion followed. Finally the teacher suggested that since the time was short, they had better summarize what had been listed to do. She itemized the summary on the black-board:

1. Cut bulbs in half to see how they look. Make a diagram for our notebooks.
2. Look in the science book for information and study the diagram.
3. Cut a bulb after it has grown awhile to find out if some of the bulb is gone.

The children talked about what to do first and decided by vote to cut in half one of the bulbs which had not yet sprouted. Apparently one child's argument influenced the vote. He said, "I think

we ought just to cut a bulb in two and look at it because that will save a lot of reading and save the trouble of asking an authority. We can decide for ourselves."

A new question arose when they decided to cut an onion. The teacher said, "How can we know that an onion is a bulb?" Since the children were not sure, they agreed to find out more about that question, too.

Forty children were in the room. They decided to separate into four groups. The teacher suggested that they form their own groups.

"Look around and join a group of fewer than ten children," she said.

The observer did not have time to remain in the room to see the children complete their study, but perhaps this report will enable the reader to get an idea of the nature of the work. Several questions remained to be answered after the experimentation. Some of the children checked their observations with statements in garden bulletins and reported to the class.



A room full of science, High Point, N. C.

Science In Everyday Things

A third-grade teacher in a Wisconsin school experiments in helping children to become aware of science in everyday things. One day, for example, the pupils tried to make a candle burn in a

pumpkin. They found that the candle did burn well when they cut out nose, eyes, and mouth in the pumpkin, making it into a jack-o-lantern. Then they noted that when the cut-out pieces were inserted the candle went out. The teacher helped them supplement their observation with reading and they concluded that the candle needed air to cause it to burn.

Again when the children were making observations about things that are dropped, they dropped a crumpled piece of paper along with a flat piece of similar size. The crumpled piece of paper fell faster. The teacher helped them explain the reason for the difference and talked about the principle involved in the children's kites and paper darts.

A boy in an Oklahoma second grade told the class about the canaries his family had. The children were interested. The boy's mother then brought several canaries to school, and from this initial experience the children became interested in bird and animal babies. They learned how birds hatch and grow. They made a trip to a rabbit hutch to see young rabbits. They studied about farm animals and their young.

Sometimes a teacher's interest spreads to the children. A fifth-grade teacher in Wisconsin is interested in rocks. She has a large collection and has received State-wide publicity for the way in which she is stimulating interest in the children. The youngsters explore areas around their school and homes and some make collections. They read widely about rocks. All have learned interesting facts of history and geology through the work.

The Science of Conservation

An Indiana sixth grade studied soil. They were interested in learning that there are different types of soil. They studied reasons for conserving soil and learned how farmers around their city were conserving soil. They planted seeds in soil in which commercial fertilizer had been added. They also planted seeds in soil without any fertilizer, and then compared the growth of the plants. Two boys tested samples of soil taken from the home yards and gardens. The class took up the problem of improving their home lawns. They invited a farm agent to tell them how to improve different types of soil. With the farm agent's help, several children computed the number of pounds of fertilizer needed for their home lawns. To do this, they had to find the area of different types of yards. At home, they drew the shape of their lawns. Some were triangular; others oblong. Some had the house in the middle;

others had it near the road. The problem was an extended and interesting one.

An Oklahoma class noticed that the school yard had been newly seeded with grass, and a group of boys on their own initiative drove sticks into the ground near the corners of the yard and tied strings to the sticks to remind children and others not to walk on the grass.

A Washington sixth-grade group on a hike discovered a snake in a tree swallowing a small bird. A study of the habits and values of certain kinds of snakes followed.

A conservation program in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades of a Montana school was made possible by the lease of a section of forested mountain land. With the cooperation of the Forest Service agent and the conservation agent of the community, the pupils observed and studied the results of conservation in the area. They cut away brush, studied the effect of different kinds of trees on the soil, and selected and planted the most suitable trees. From three to four days each spring and fall are devoted to the project.

A number of schools have secured plots of land in which children and teachers establish nature trails and wild flower sanctuaries, study care of the soil, have picnics, and carry on other interesting outdoor activities. Many others are looking for land to be used in such ways.

In another Oklahoma school, parent groups bought tulip, iris, and crocus bulbs for each child in school. More than 600 bulbs were planted. When these began to bloom, the children shared the flowers with the people in the neighborhood. A number of persons reported that after this project, the children were more careful about flowers and about refraining from walking on lawns; there were fewer complaints about children destroying flowers. When the bulbs multiplied, the children dug them and took some home for planting.

From the science teaching observed for this study, it is not possible to draw hard and fast conclusions about science programs in general, because examples are too limited. In many instances, instruction in science is incidental. In some cases there is a planned curriculum limited to the science class. In some others, however, both incidental and planned activities in science take their essential place in a total program and children's learning has the fullness and richness that science can add.

In the teaching observed, teachers appear to be guiding their pupils in such activities as the following:

- (a) *Children experiment informally, read, observe, inquire about the facts from people who are authorities, and take field trips.*
- (b) *Teachers help their pupils learn ways of finding answers to things they do not understand and ways of learning why certain facts are true.*
- (c) *Teachers help the boys and girls learn to think more clearly and to enjoy more fully what they see or read.*
- (d) *There is wide variation from school to school, from class to class, and even within classes, in the amount and kind of science taught, with many opportunities for teachers to help boys and girls find and develop interests and abilities that greatly enrich present ways of living and carry into adult life.*

Learning How To Be Well and Safe

Most schools provide for many of the ordinary health activities, including the teacher's observation each day, periodic physical examinations, correction of defects, hot lunch, rest and quiet after lunch, supervised and unsupervised play, instruction and guidance when needed, happy and satisfying living, the development of a healthful environment, and the services of a school nurse. Following are examples of activities carried on by different schools.

Participation In School Lunch Activities

School lunch is an opportunity for learning as well as an active factor in school health. Pupils of a 7-year school, for example, assign responsibilities for lunch to different groups of pupils and teachers. Two mothers prepare the lunch in a building or "kitchen" near the school. The seventh-grade teacher takes responsibility for planning the meals. She includes the pupils in planning whenever it is to their advantage. Her pupils collect 15 cents a day from each child in every room of the school. They compute the total amount collected, check the children to be served, fill out the deposit slip, and take the money to the bank. Each week two different pupils take responsibility for each separate task.

For each room, there is a lunch committee of four or five children who take orders for lunch each morning from a menu written on the blackboard. Choices on the menu are balanced and second

helpings are provided. The menu is changed each day. A sample menu includes a baked potato, new lima beans, a small corn muffin or bread, green salad or coleslaw, a square of cheese, chocolate or white milk, and an apple. The lunch committee goes to the kitchen for the food and carries it in baskets or on trays to the separate rooms. Plates are served and placed on a table in each room. The children or a guest return thanks. Then they take their places at their desks or tables for the meal.

Another committee for each room clears away the dishes, scrapes them, takes them back to the kitchen, and washes off tables and desks. Teachers feel that the lunch period gives them an opportunity to learn a great deal about the children, their food habits, certain family eating customs, and food patterns. There is plenty of time for such activities because the children do not go out of doors to play at noon, but have a play period later.



Time out for refreshments in a lunchroom the children and teacher arranged, North Little Rock, Ark.

In each room at the beginning of the year, pupils and teachers discuss table manners and draw up a set of suggestions. These are supplemented as needed.

A certain Louisiana school has a general program with emphasis on health in all the rooms tied into choices of food, selecting a good breakfast, care of teeth, and good practices in home and family living.

The noon lunch program in school has made a great difference in the lives of the children in a South Carolina mill town. Because of shift work in the mill, conditions in many of the homes were not conducive to eating a nourishing midday meal. Since the children have been eating lunch at school the parents and teachers believe that the health of the boys and girls has improved. The teachers believe that the children will come to understand better the relationship between the food they eat and their general well being, and that social learnings have come about through the school lunches.

The way the lunch is managed contributes to social development. The lunchroom seats two or three grades at one time. As soon as the children take their places at the table they begin to eat. Grace is said after the last child of the last room to enter takes his place. By this plan, the food can be eaten while it is still hot. A boy and girl act as host and hostess. The teachers eat with their pupils. No one leaves the table until all are finished. The children have learned to carry on interesting conversations. They do not hurry with their eating.

In this school, as in many other schools visited, efforts are made to have lunches that provide the kind of food that is good for children and at the same time popular. An example of a menu from one school placed on the bulletin board a week ahead read thus: Fried chicken drumsticks, creamed Irish potatoes, chopped vegetable salad, biscuits, butter, honey, and milk. The list of menus for the week showed no two alike.

Breakfast is also served at the school at 8:45 a.m. for children whose mothers work during the morning shift. Cereal and milk cost the children 6 cents.

A full balanced meal such as the school lunch costs the children 12 cents. These low costs are made possible partly through the school garden. Before school is out in the spring the garden is planted. It is cared for during the summer by the children and their parents. It furnishes many of the vegetables for lunches during the year. The canning is done by the older children and the parents under the supervision of the home economics teacher. Children also pick blackberries, which the mothers can.

Thanksgiving dinner is provided at school. The fourth-grade children help to plan this dinner. They decide on the menu and make the table decorations. The fifth grade had charge of a wiener roast and picnic. During the interval between the first planning and the picnic the price of potato chips rose from 69 cents to 95 cents for a large package. The children were faced not only with a real arithmetic problem but with a real life problem in inflation.

Nutrition Study

In some of the schools studied, nutrition receives special emphasis. Teachers of a certain city's fifth grade and local parent groups made a survey of the eating habits of fifth-grade children, including the city's fifth grade as partners in the study. From the results of the survey new subject matter and activities in nutrition were planned.

As an incidental part of the study, the fifth-grade children were asked who their favorite widely-known people were. The results were: Actress, Betty Grable; Radio performers, Dagwood and Blondie; Cowboy, Roy Rogers; Athlete, Joe Louis. The children wrote letters to these people explaining about the study and asking if they would tell their eating habits. The children discussed with great interest the replies received.

With the help of the high-school home economics classes, the fifth grade studied social aspects of eating, including ways of setting a table, what to talk about at lunch, and general etiquette. The high-school class went from school to school and set a properly laid table in each. When the tables were set parents were invited in and the children told what they had learned. Teachers, parents, and children discussed what could be done at home to increase the effectiveness of the study. After 2 months the parents evaluated the eating habits of their children, and noted improvement.

As another activity incidental to the main project, some of the classes put up posters in grocery store windows emphasizing the basic seven foods, the importance of green and yellow vegetables, and the significance of a "happy stomach" at eating time. Health committees of parent groups, together with the teachers of the classes doing the study, kept in touch with the parents about the food needs of the boys and girls.

In some of the rural schools visited, teachers discuss with the children their food needs for the day, and all work, not necessarily toward one balanced meal, but toward food for breakfast, dinner, and supper that balances the whole day's meals. When parents cooperate in planning, the teacher's responsibility for the children's nutrition is lightened.

Camping and Outdoor Experiences

Many schools have opportunities for camping and outdoor experiences. The program in certain Wisconsin schools is typical of the better outdoor programs. A nature area is located on the school grounds. Children are included in the planning. Men from

the State Conservation Department often help the boys and girls test soil and plan ways of developing the area. The State has provided some trees for the project and the children have raised money to buy additional trees of their own choice. A city garden club works with the children. The area is an ideal place for cooking outdoors, picnics, nature study, hikes, and camping. Arts, crafts, sports programs are provided and are attended by a large percentage of the children who do not go away to camp or take trips.

A number of other schools are providing outdoor experiences for the boys and girls. Through cooperative planning, one school and community provided skating and swimming for the elementary pupils; another, school picnics and camping. Other schools study aspects of science out-of-doors; practice conservation of trees, soil, flowers, and other natural resources; and garden.

Many school people believe that camping should be a part of the regular elementary curriculum. In this way every child could have camp experience at least once before high school. One school provides a week at camp for every sixth-grade pupil. A small fee is paid by the children, if they are able to pay. Expert directors and counselors are employed for the camp by the school board. Land and buildings are leased. The children spend a week at camp, sleeping in small groups in cabins and eating in a common hall. They are responsible for the ordinary housekeeping tasks of the camp. Instruction in crafts is provided. Pupils have the choice of many interesting activities, including collecting insects, plant specimens, and rocks and working with clay, basketry, and wood.

A school in Washington State is introducing the idea of the family outing as a valuable experience for children. Parents have study groups on getting the most enjoyment from family trips and outdoor experiences.

Preparing for Healthful, Happy, and Safe Vacations

Many schools help prepare children for out-of-school safety and health. In preparing for summer vacation, for example, a sixth grade made a list of problems that might arise on trips and in other outdoor experiences. One item concerned what to do in case of accidents. Some pupils volunteered to be patients. Others demonstrated what to do for them. There were opportunities for questions and discussions. Here are some of the problems in the list.

- (a) A boy is swinging. He falls and hurts his head. How can first aid be given?
- (b) A boy breaks his arm. What should be done?
- (c) A boy takes a hike. He is bitten by a snake. What should his companions do?
- (d) Sunburn. "The best remedy is not get it."
- (e) Two boys are chopping wood. One cuts a leg artery and faints. What should the other boy do?

The same class extended their first-aid study to include vacation problems, such as accidents when traveling, or swimming. Collections of bulletins, pictures, posters, and folders on such subjects were made and classified.

In one school, the home economics teacher takes the upper-grade classes on a camping trip during the summer. In the same school, the American Legion and the mill owners provide a bus one day a week to take children to the swimming pool at a city park.

A Missouri town provides money to run a summer recreation program. Teachers help with the program. Arts, crafts, music, and physical education activities are included. Each school serves the children of its immediate community.

Play and Recreation

Schools observed in Kentucky, Washington State, North Dakota, Illinois, Florida, Mississippi, and a few other States appear to place stress on opportunities for well-planned but free play and recreation. Classroom teachers usually have responsibility for the work, although consultants are provided in some systems to give advice and to suggest sources of ideas. Folk dances, rhythms, and stunts are associated with the recreational program, as in a certain Oregon school. Dramatization and free play are encouraged as one type of recreation in certain Wyoming classrooms.

In many schools free play with or without apparatus is a part of the children's recess fun.

Among characteristics of the good health programs observed are the following:

- (a) *School nurses, teachers, and other members of the school staff cooperate both in the instructional program and in health services.*
- (b) *Home, school, and community cooperate on children's school lunch, nutrition, and recreational programs and in vacation activities.*

- (c) *For every child, part of each day, week, and year is set aside for wholesome play and recreation.*
- (d) *Happiness and emotional security for every child are regarded as a responsibility of the school.*
- (e) *The home cooperates with the school in seeing that children get sufficient sleep and rest and that neither school nor home activities produce undue tension.*

Improvement of Social Understanding and Experience

Many activities in the schools visited help children gain social understanding and experience good ways of living in school, at home, and in the community. In carrying on such activities, children draw on the social studies for information. Some of them require information from other subjects as well. In some of the schools, major or over-all centers of interest that seem most promising in helping the children develop social understanding and good ways of living are planned cooperatively by staff curriculum committees and stated in a curriculum guide or circular. Teachers and children plan in relation to these centers the kind of activities and experiences needed from day to day. A Utah school system, for example, used the following major centers of interest:

6-year-olds—	The Home and the School
7-year-olds—	The Neighborhood
8-year-olds—	The Community
9-year-olds—	The State and Introduction to United States History
10-year-olds—	The Americas
11- and 12-year-olds—	Current World Problems (on level of student's understanding)

A New Jersey school has social themes as centers of interest, such as conservation, democracy, and community services with science, history, geography, health, and art used as needed.

Promising activities in the schools are, in this bulletin, grouped around several interest centers. Classroom, school grounds, and the children's living at home provide one center. The neighborhood, community, and other people and their ways of living make another group. Other centers include what goes on in the world; how our country has changed; our Nation's past and present; and how to be and to have friends and establish good relations with other people and other nations.

For the most part, the children's improvement in social living and understanding is in charge of classroom teachers. An Oregon school reports that the teacher of home and family living serves as consultant to the seventh- and eighth-grade teachers and that the teacher of home and family living and industrial arts teacher both serve as consultants to primary and middle-grade teachers.

Making Classroom and School Grounds Attractive, Convenient, and Safe

Teachers and children need a classroom that at times serves as a home, a laboratory, and a conference room. Children are encouraged to cooperate in making the classroom that kind of place. A young man, for example, employed to teach fifth- and sixth-grade classes in Idaho, found that the desks of his classroom were all attached to the floor. He secured permission to move the desks and took them up himself. With the help of the children, he located some second-hand tables and chairs. He bought these. The older boys helped him cut off the legs to make the tables the right height for the pupils. The boys and girls and their parents repaired and painted them. Using the tables and chairs, committees and small groups could work and plan together.

Many other teachers and children have made their classrooms more convenient for study. Working space is provided by additional tables sometimes made from boxes. Shelves for independent and individual activities and interest centers are made by pupils and teachers. Pocket charts for records of books read and other notes are made by children. Flat boxes for collections are brought from home or donated by stores.

Many classes have made their rooms attractive with arrangements of flowers and vegetables in season, puppets and costume dolls, murals, and other objects constructed creatively and attractively, often in connection with various other school activities. Some, as in one Oregon school, paint and shift furniture to make the classroom more livable. Pupils in other classes bring color into the room through window draperies and linoleum squares on the floor. Teachers and pupils who plan draperies for windows place the hangings on the wall next to the window rather than over the glass in order that the light may not be shut out. A North Carolina fourth grade took responsibility for the care of a flower bed on the school grounds. In the same school, boys and girls also planned for certain pupils to arrange flowers attractively in entrance halls and classrooms.

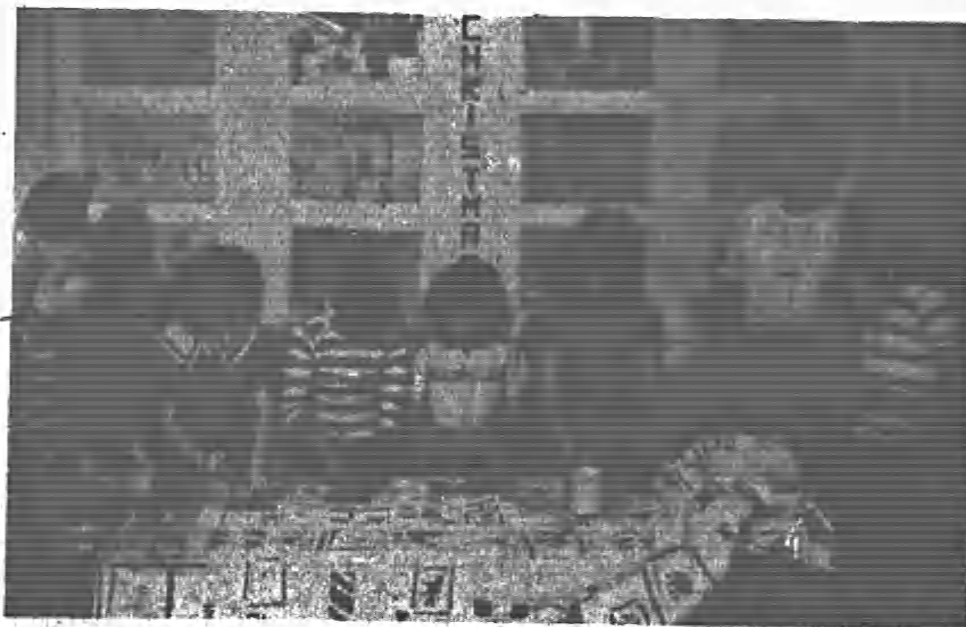
In many places, pupils have a part in beautifying the school grounds. In a Texas school, the boys and girls dredged out a creek bed at the back of the school lot, allowing the water to flow along more smoothly. They constructed side walls so that the creek would not overflow after a heavy rain. Plants were arranged along the banks to add to the attractiveness of the stream.

Better Home Living

In some schools more than in others, opportunities are provided for the children to have a part in improving their homes. In certain places, boys and girls learn to understand and be responsible for their share of housekeeping, such as helping to cook, wash dishes, and keep the home clean and orderly. In other places, pupils learn how to do some simple buying for their homes, particularly buying food. In others, boys and girls get an understanding of easy tasks connected with planning and preparing good meals, canning, and gardening.

Teachers have different ways of introducing activities of home and family living, sometimes in connection with social studies, sometimes in separate projects or as part of the everyday living program in the primary grades. A California school shows a film-strip entitled "Father Buys a House."

The children usually look at the picture with interest. The film shows how father, mother, and children use a home and garden and yard in ways that contribute to the happiness of the entire



Curtains for the library windows, Athens, Ga.

family. One class used the film in connection with a playhouse they were building, large enough for them to use for play and work.

Some schools engage in conserving natural resources, such as birds, animals, flowers, or soil. Through care of school grounds, the children learn about soil needs. They often apply at home what they learn in school.

In communities where the children have set out flowers and other kinds of plants on the school grounds, as in some schools in Kentucky and Ohio, the idea has spread into the homes and parents and children discuss and sometimes accomplish needed improvements of grounds at home. In one community, the school board employed an architect to advise about the school grounds. Ideas resulting from discussions with the architect and from the pupils' and parents' work on the school grounds that followed carried into the children's home yards. The Ohio school garden project referred to on page 53 resulted in more and cheaper vegetables in many diets, and flowers on tables where they would not otherwise have been. When mothers have helped plan the school lunch and discussed with teachers the children's food needs, the result has sometimes been better meals at home and increased interest of the children in helping to do some of the planning and work connected with meal-getting at home.

Older children in some schools meet with groups of younger children and advise with them. Most frequent opportunities for such experiences occur in one- and two-room schools. Eighth-grade children in a Wisconsin school are responsible for helping 4- and 5-year-old kindergarten children. "During the first 2 weeks of school, the eighth-graders practically live with the younger ones," said the principal. During this period the older children ride on the busses with the kindergarteners and take them to their homes.

Older children are often responsible for younger ones on trips. Fifth- and sixth-grade boys and girls are next to the seventh- and eighth-graders in line of responsibility. When older boys and girls go along with younger ones, they aid the younger ones in planning, call their attention to interesting things on trips, and encourage them to discover tasks or problems for which they can be responsible. It is hoped that experience of this kind for older pupils will be a factor in the development of a sense of responsibility as home members.

Studying and Working in Neighborhood and Community

Probably all the schools arrange for children to observe or talk about the industries and products of the home, neighborhood, and

community. Curriculum guides and general outlines in courses of study reviewed by visitors suggest the home community as an interest or activity center at least once in the elementary school program and also as background for experiences that lead into other areas of interest. A few schools do more. They provide children with opportunities to learn about their communities by participating in community activities or by giving service to their communities. The nature and difficulty of the experiences depend upon the interests and maturity of the pupils. To a second grade the community may be a source of problems that the children need to understand or do something about partly as a matter of curiosity. Teachers were observed to be providing experiences to help young children to feel at home and secure in relation to community agencies and service. Older pupils were seen studying the community from the standpoint of what they as citizens could do to improve its services. Ways in which the teacher and children organize and carry on their studies depend on the interest, growth needs, and background of the children.

A group of seventh- and eighth-grade pupils in Idaho provide an example of an extended community study. The pupils became interested in the production of beet sugar in the community and in the problems related to it, such as proper care of the soil, water supply, and a balanced production of supplementary crops. Teachers and children together planned their questions. They arranged for six trips to fields to observe mechanical harvesters and to a beet sugar factory to see beet sugar manufactured. They invited five specialists on production and marketing of beets to talk to them. They rented a motion picture for the class to look at and discuss. They drew maps to show the location of the industry in Idaho and to illustrate the irrigation systems and source of water. They collected material from magazines, books, and encyclopedias, and from sellers at a beet dump secured weight and deduction slips and copies of growers' contracts.

Three boys planted three types of seed to try to compare the amount of production of each type. The girls tried to make some sugar from beets donated by a grower but obtained only candy. After their trip to observe two kinds of beet harvesters and the weighing and taring of beets, the pupils made notes on a tape recorder. These were played back and the class discussed them and planned improvement for the reports. Letters requesting permission to visit factories were written by the pupils. Letters received were acknowledged.

The eighth grade got some practical experience in computation

when they worked out gross weight and net weight of uncleaned and cleaned samples from four loads of beets. They figured the cost per acre of growing sugar beets and compared it with the cost of growing potatoes. One girl made a plan on a chart entitled *Your Soil Account--An Eight-Year Rotation*. Wheat, alfalfa, potatoes, and beets were included in the plan with estimates of production. The effects of these crops on the soil were indicated.

The experience of keeping records was a good one. The teacher kept a log of all activities. The pupils had access to this. Each pupil kept a detailed record of projects initiated by him or assigned to him. Committees kept records of class and group activities. Copies of letters asking for help from people in the community were preserved. Some of the children's reports and discussions recorded on tape were kept. The class made a list of things they learned through their study.



Come a little closer, please! Milwaukee County, Wis.

A class of third-graders in a Massachusetts school used one of their trips as the basis of a radio play which was broadcast. In the same city, a fifth grade planned a trip to study the industries and services in their city. They were so enthusiastic about the study that they succeeded in getting five adults to go with them and share the cost of food and transportation for the study. In

the same city, also, a third grade first studied points of interest using information to which their parents and teacher directed them in the home and classroom. Then they took a trip through the city to visit those points of interest. They were particularly interested in Echo Bridge, not only because of its unique function of carrying water from the Sudbury aqueduct into the Charles River, but because of the elusive echo that they heard when they called to one another.

One school paper writes as follows: Such trips are not merely play times but more important learning activities. The children become aware of the beautiful scenery in the city. They see the industrial section and travel to points of historical interest.

In Pennsylvania, we have an example of a functional use of a museum exhibit. A second grade studied a collection of shells, learning to identify many and using some to help them identify specimens in their own collections. The children also got ideas for organizing, classifying, and extending their own collections. In the museum, there is an exhibit of products made from shells. This, too, was used to advantage in connection with the children's collection. The products included buttons, combs, pins, and other jewelry, door stops, foghorns, gravel for roadbeds, and fertilizer. A special display showed how cameos were made from conch shells. The children had an opportunity to see and feel objects that they did not have access to in any other way. In connection with the museum, there is a full-scale greenhouse. From this plants are supplied to the school for experimental purposes and for decorations. The museum and art gallery are the property of the school board and part of the public-school system. The director of visual education in the school is a member of the museum staff.

A variety of children's activities were observed in connection with community projects carried on by the schools. Among them are excursions and travel and interviews; collecting local newspaper clippings; invitations to speakers, such as doctors, nurses, park managers, zoo directors, radio commentators, editors, and restaurant managers; and participation in community activities. These activities theoretically are the means to more important ends in the children's development, such as attainment of poise, a feeling of being citizens who are important, and a sense of being responsible for "how good is the town we live in."

A South Dakota school held a hobby fair. Among the displays were exhibits related to wild birds of the vicinity, stamp collections, collections of keys, a group of costume dolls, collections of pencils, unusual miniatures, and a collection of bars of soap.

Two of the activities commonly engaged in are excursions and participation in community activities. They usually meet with approval of children and parents. In addition to helping a child to understand his environment, excursions broaden his horizon. Children's travel experiences usually begin with excursions or trips to places of local interest. Children are always eager to take a trip; their parents are usually eager to help make the experience possible. A few illustrations here will show how excursions and travel are regarded by schools of the study. Some schools, for example, plan at the beginning of the year the excursions that can be taken during the semester or the year ahead, keeping programs flexible enough to include them when the appropriate time arrives. A sample local travel program for a South Dakota school enables different grades and classes to combine excursions when desirable. It reads as follows:

Kindergarten	No excursions except school and immediate neighborhood
First grade	City library
Second grade	City park, radio station, fire station, bakery, and a trip around the city in a city bus
Third grade	Lumber company
Fourth grade	City library
Fifth grade	City library and telephone company
Sixth grade	Telephone company and municipal airport

Other trips taken in elementary schools in this city included excursions to new homes, a food market, a dairy farm, a fire station, the city post office, the city museum, an implement company, a florist shop, a greenhouse, and the offices of two newspapers.

In most of the States visited, opportunities for boys and girls to take trips are provided through cooperation of school and parents. A third grade in New York State, for example, visited important places in and around their city and located these on the map. Some places were near enough for children to reach in the school bus. Parents provided transportation to places further away. Some of the children earned part of their fare. Some of the parents say they learned along with the children.

A fourth grade in the same school with the cooperation of the parents extended their travel to communities in other parts of the United States. Through the kind of class travel just described, boys and girls increased their understanding of other people living around them. They learned through visits to museums and me-

mentals how people in other times lived and worked. They gained appreciation of the times in which they are living.

Because most of the children in one primary grade had never ridden on a train, the teacher planned a train trip to a nearby city. The plans were made with the conductor and engineer so that boys and girls had a chance to buy their tickets, to go through the train, to see how a berth is made up, to eat in a diner, to inspect the locomotive, and to visit the roundhouse.

A city school system in Connecticut works in cooperation with the police department in sponsoring a 4-day trip to Washington, D. C., and one pupil in each school makes the trip every year. The police department releases two men with two town cars to take the children to Washington. When they return, the boys who make the trip report to their school in an assembly. Once one of the boys was invited to report to a group of parents.

Participation in community activities helps children become good citizens. While opportunities for children to take trips and look at objects in the community are numerous, opportunities are less numerous for participation, which is more important than mere observation and discussion. A number of participating activities, however, were reported to be going on in the schools. In all cases, the activities were selected with regard to their suitability for children.

Among the activities in which children do engage are: Raising money for such organizations as the American Junior Red Cross, the March of Dimes, the local or nearby children's hospitals or homes; giving service, such as baby sitting for neighbors, taking care of younger children in community gatherings; organizing and supervising activities of a Fun-Without-Destruction Halloween; collecting magazines for a hospital; organizing recreation clubs for the neighborhood (older pupils); taking part in programs of local celebrations such as Fourth of July and Christmas; and helping to beautify school grounds and roadsides.

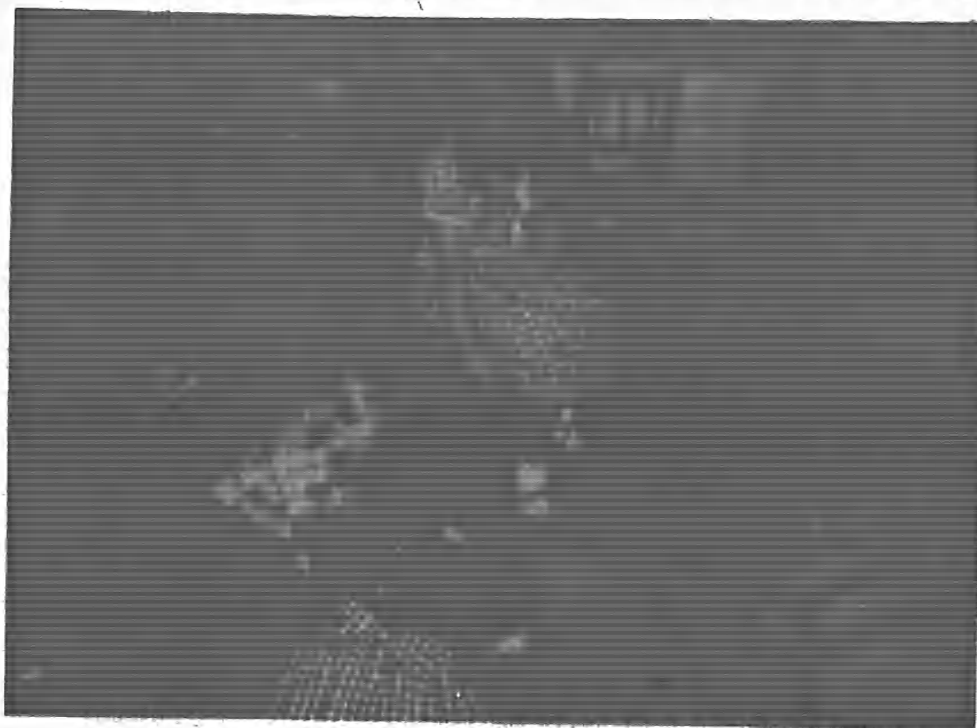
The Ways and Growth of Democracy

Probably most teachers and parents believe that one of the first steps in learning the ways of democracy is to practice democracy in school and home. In the practices described in the foregoing sections of this bulletin, many democratic procedures are mentioned. Particularly important are the teacher's planning and working with children instead of handing out assignments and giving commands. Study groups, committees, clubs, and pupil councils operate democratically.

Other practices that probably help children learn ways of democracy are to study, to dramatize, and to participate in the government and the business of their community. An illustration is a project of the first grade in an Indiana school. The teacher of the first grade used the children's interest in a forthcoming local election to get them interested in organizing a government for their class and in voting on officers—a mayor, judge, clerk, and councilmen. The children set up a booth in the classroom where each pupil could vote in privacy, as their parents would vote privately, in the adult election. The picture below shows the election committee counting the votes after the election.

An Arkansas sixth grade has a citizenship club, one of whose aims is to help sixth-graders "practice the kind of good citizenship that helps younger children know what citizenship means." The members of this club plan annual Halloween carnivals. They give programs for the rest of the school, for parent groups, and for civic and service clubs. Other citizenship clubs are organized with similar duties adapted to the needs and resources of the school and community.

Ways of teaching children to understand our nation and other democratic nations of the world include many of the activities, problems, and projects of the regular curriculum, with consistent and serious attention to the appropriate facts of history and geog-



Counting votes after a school election, Hammond, Ind.

raphy. In a certain New England community, for example, the children live in the midst of the riches of colonial history. In helping children understand how the United States grew into a free and democratic nation, teachers try to bring to life reminders of the problems and the accomplishments of early settlers.

One year a teacher of a seventh grade wrote a play entitled "The Minute Men," in which the story of the Minute Men of the American Revolution was closely related to the story of American service men in Korea today. The children liked the play. They decided to dramatize it as part of an entertainment. They formed committees to plan and make the costumes and stage properties and to direct the staging. Wide reading and study were necessary to present the play accurately. An art supervisor helped the pupils plan costumes and stage properties.

The teacher says another step in the children's understanding of local history may be undertaking the writing as well as the production of a historical play based on local history.

A Tennessee sixth grade made a study about manufactured articles of modern times which included local industries, some in other parts of the United States, and some in Europe, with special emphasis on the effects of such products on ways of living. The children began with articles made in their home city and with the factories that produced these articles. A chart of home-produced articles was made as follows:

Things We Make in	
Plastic	Eastman
Books	City Press
Paper	Meade Fibre
Explosives	Holston Ordnance
Glass	Blue Ridge
Cement	Penn-Dixie
Rayon yarn	Eastman
Cotton	Borden Mills
Hosiery	Smokie Mountain Hosiery Mills

The children's list was long. It included chemicals, flour, dairy products, factory products, a bottling plant, an iron foundry, a slaughter house, brick products, construction enterprises, cloth for books and garments, and newspapers. In their study, the children traced some of these articles into their own homes and observed their effect on everyday living.

The manufactured products of modern Europe were studied next. The emphasis of the children's European study was on textiles and pottery. The pupils noted that the finished products

of western Europe were similar to those of the United States. Maps were studied, pictures collected, and newspaper clippings collected and read. The teacher helped the children emphasize the people's homes and ways of living, their recreation, and their culture, language, and travel.

A Wisconsin sixth grade organized for a study of France. As they planned together, teacher and children made a list of the things they wanted to find out and grouped these under three main headings: Interesting Places in France, Cities in France, and Work Done in France. When the items and questions the children thought of were listed under each of the big headings, the boys and girls volunteered to gather detailed information about different questions and ideas. The children planned to work in groups of two's and three's. After some study, each small group began to think of ways to make good reports to the rest of the class. The type of reports decided on included an original play that would pull together important information, film strips and slides, a mural, and a committee discussion in which the government of France would be compared with that of the United States.

A sixth grade in a Massachusetts school increased their understanding of the changes that science and invention have brought to our country and to the world when they made a study of the men who contributed to the improvement of airplanes and flying. After study and discussion, the class decided that a short play would be one of the most effective ways of letting pupils of the other grades share a bit of the pleasure and information gained through the study. A steering committee of six children was selected by the class to decide which high lights of the study should be presented. Each member of the committee chose three children to work with him on an act. When the six groups had completed the writing, the children read their papers to the class for suggestions. Another committee painted scenery for the stage. When the play was finally perfected to the satisfaction of the children, it was presented to the school.

A Minnesota fourth grade report world news articles heard over the radio, gathered from local travelers, or read in current events papers. As the children learn to read short items and headlines in newspapers, they look for world news and omit local gossip, accidents, and other things of little importance.

A Mississippi fifth grade was interested in people who make news. On the bulletin board under the title the pupils wrote: "Can You Identify These Men—Eisenhower, Churchill, Acheson?"

Many festivals and holidays afford opportunities for children to

have fun and at the same time gain understanding of customs and other influences on ways of living. One school has a May Day program with a different theme each year, usually of social or cultural significance in the community. One year the theme was hemispheric solidarity, in which different groups of children made studies of certain other nations of the Western Hemisphere. Each grade plans and presents one feature. All the children take part in the broad features, such as the Maypole dance. Parents and friends attend. Many pictures are taken and pupils and adults have a good time together.

In a number of schools, children study about the United Nations. They write for bulletins from the Department of State in Washington, D. C., and from their own State education department. They use their current events papers to get information. They collect references to the United Nations from newspapers. Some schools post copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on bulletin boards where pupils can read them and refer to the articles. Pupils color the United Nations on outline maps of the world. They discuss ways in which people can make the articles of the declaration come more nearly true. A Minnesota sixth grade prepared programs on the United Nations to be given to younger pupils, trying to have the activities simple and clear enough for the younger boys and girls to understand. A fifth and sixth grade studied the problems of the people of the United Nations. Another group planned an exhibit of the clothes, cooking utensils, types of food and objects of art, such as vases and basketry representing different countries in the United Nations group.

Learning How To Be Friends—to Other People and to Other Nations

Children want to have friends. Reports of certain schools visited mention children reaching out for friendship, helping new pupils to get acquainted in school and community, offering to help one another, learning to be polite and courteous and not "mad" at one another, writing to boys and girls in hospitals, sharing toys, helping younger children get acquainted with children of other races and nationalities, learning to like and understand those who are older or younger than themselves, as well as boys and girls of their own age.

In all schools, a spirit of friendliness is expressed informally. In a certain Tennessee school, for example, the children have discussed the importance of a person's going out of his way to greet classmates and guests in a friendly way. Guests are

thanked for coming. A neighborhood dog follows the principal to school and "helps" in the office. During noon hour older boys show films to those who wish to watch. The school keeps in touch with many alumni. Gib Crockett, who is a cartoonist for *The Evening Star* of Washington, D.C., is an alumnus of the school. On a bulletin board in the hall, articles about alumni are kept together with pictures of their babies, short statements of important things that alumni have done, and some of Crockett's cartoons.

In a Texas school system, several pupils turned to a discussion of personal problems, such as how to get to feel at home when you are new in the school and what to do when your friend is "mad" at you. For example, your friend and you were walking home together and you bumped into him and made him drop his book. He thought you did it on purpose and you explained that it was an accident. He did not accept your apology and is still mad. The teacher and other pupils asked questions: Did you tell him you were sorry? Did you do something especially nice for him? How could you show him you were sorry rather than try to tell him?

Other examples for experiences in friendship include one from a New Hampshire school. During the day, the son of a sixth-grade teacher was injured in a car accident and a kindergarten teacher became ill and was hospitalized. On every hand, offers



One way to learn about how and where other people live, Cedar City, Utah.

of help came from children and teachers. The sixth-grade pupils said, "We will take care of recess. That can be our share in helping Mrs. ———."

When new pupils enter a certain Pennsylvania school, a special attempt is made to have them feel at home. Two children from Georgia recently entered a third grade. The pupils showed them the school and introduced them to other teachers and children. The newcomers were invited to tell about Georgia. A fourth grade in the same school had a new pupil, a Dutch girl who could not speak English. The children helped her learn English. In doing this, they collected magazines and cut out pictures of things children like or use often, such as toys, farm animals, food, vehicles, and clothing. Different pupils served as translators when the group talked about these pictures. The child learned English quickly.

A Pennsylvania first grade talked about courtesy and what a person should do and say in certain situations. The children, for example, were interested in an incident that happened when the mothers gave a tea for the teacher. One pupil came into the room during the tea with a message for his teacher. His problem was to know just how to meet the situation in a courteous way. He first met a mother that he knew near the door. She smiled at him and he greeted her before going to his teacher who was some steps away. Then he spoke to his teacher and handed her the message. The teacher told the children about the incident, asking them to bring up for discussion other instances of courtesy.

One school reports: "Boys and girls improve their social skills in their contacts with people. The understanding they get through their study of other people past and present and of their changing ways of living provides a background for citizenship, for social competence and responsibility, and for national and world understanding."

Three Latvian children whose fathers and mothers were displaced Europeans were assigned to a fifth grade in a Nebraska school. When the boys and girls learned that these strangers were coming to their school, they made preparations for helping them feel at home. Each fifth-grader wanted to help the Latvians learn English and was eager to try to speak the Latvian language. Someone suggested the use of picture dictionaries, and a number of copies were borrowed. When the Latvians arrived they were eagerly welcomed. Different children had been appointed to be their hosts from time to time. The American children shared their toys with their guests and eventually took

them to movies and the local historical landmarks. They asked the Latvians to locate their country on the map for the class to see. On a map of the United States, they pointed out interesting places for the Latvians to visit when they could and explained what the places mean to Americans. Bob invited Petrus to attend a circus with him and both boys said they had more fun than they had ever had before.

Petrus brought some Latvian storybooks to school, and the American children tried to read them. Petrus in turn received such good baseball coaching that he turned out to be a better batter and pitcher than most of the American boys.

Often children develop an interest in people of other countries because they know someone who has been in another country—a brother or sister in the Service, a playmate whose parents travel, or a classmate who has lived in another country.



Packing outgrown clothes to be sent to children in other countries, Fort Wayne, Ind.

In a certain Delaware second grade, a child who had been in Japan with his parents was greatly interested in Japan and the Japanese people, among whom he had a number of friends. His interest in Japan carried over into other countries. He fre-

quently sought information about life in other countries. He added greatly to the children's interest in people who live in other countries and frequently made contributions to class discussions. In a fourth grade in the same school there was a little girl who had lived in Holland. She had also been in South America and other places. She contributed much to her classmates' interest in other countries and gave them added incentive to learn about other people and about the geography of the countries where these people live.

Another class in this school wrote to aviation companies for materials about airlines and places that could be reached by air. Fourteen companies answered the children's letters with pictures, maps, folders, and flight folders to aid travelers. After studying the materials and letters received, the children drew maps of the United States and placed on them the airline routes. Since every child felt that some day he would really fly, each tried to learn more about the country that appealed most to him.

Teachers who help their students organize their work around major interests and problems teach study skills when the children ask such questions as where and how people live and how it happens that people are alike in some ways and different in other ways. A fourth grade became interested in studying about people of other countries. Different groups in the grade selected a country to study. This was the time when the teacher placed most emphasis on the use of the globe in learning about world geography. The pupils were introduced to earth forms and to location geography in connection with their work on the country of their choice. The children's greatest interest in the study was the people's ways of living.

Through the practices observed in the improvement of children's social understanding and experience there are a number of important common elements:

- (a) *Instruction begins in the school or home with ideas, practices, or situations familiar to the child and attempts to broaden his horizons to include interest in the children of other countries.*
- (b) *Part of the curriculum deals with activities in social living, such as improvement of the environment, understanding of home and community living, economic competence at the children's level, conservation of the natural resources, recreation, and safety.*

- (c) Among outcomes expected are progress in the following types of development: (1) first steps in education for better home living; (2) ability and desire to be useful and responsible citizens; (3) understanding of the history and development and needs of the home community and of our nation; (4) recognition of the significance of our natural resources and the vital importance of conserving them; (5) understanding of the people of the world and of organizations for international co-operation; (6) mastery of essential facts and their interpretation in geography and history.

Enjoying Creative Expression

The most common fields for creative expression in the schools observed are various forms of art and handicrafts, dramatics, puppetry, rhythms, music, and dancing. Some teachers feel that they lack ability to provide such experiences for the children. In school systems where consultants are provided, teachers are developing ability to help the children to have more creative activities. A number of the schools visited are able now and then to employ classroom teachers who have special interest and training in art or music and who in their respective buildings will serve as consultants to the other teachers in those fields in addition to having charge of their own classrooms.

The fields which school systems most often emphasize are art and music. Probably much more is being done than observers were able to discover. Art especially and music to some extent are used in connection with projects and activities such as better home living, conservation activities, or gardening, to which other subjects also contribute. Thus the children have opportunities for engaging in creative expression that are often not revealed in program plans. Creative experiences, in addition to being worth while in themselves, afford desirable changes in routine work and relief from tension.

A major aim in creative activities is to provide two groups of experiences for children; first, experiences that have meaning in terms of immediate life situations; and, second, experiences that contribute to the development of the individual and create interests that may continue throughout his life.

Art In Everyday Living

In the more modern schools, children's experiences in art are closely related to everything else that they do in life situations. Children of a first grade in a California school, for example, produced lovely creative work in art related to their home and family experiences and to the school activities connected with these. Because of the free and creative atmosphere in which the children worked, they seemed to produce water color and crayon work that were original and charming. A group of Montana fifth-grade boys and girls learned to knit and crochet and got great satisfaction out of making interesting soft toys, mats, and other articles for home and school.

In a Wisconsin county first-grade pupils included many art experiences in their study of places to live. In small groups, the pupils gathered pictures and asked their parents and neighbors for information about ranch houses, two-story houses, bungalows, and apartment buildings.



Creative experiences with clay, Baltimore, Md.

The class visited several homes under construction and took one trip to a lumber yard. The initial activities gave them the idea of building "our dream house." They built their house large enough for the children to enter and play. The boards that the school provided were cut to fit at the lumber yard. The children's plans were for a ranch-style house with a kitchen, living room, dining room, and bedroom. They asked the industrial arts

teacher to cut the windows. The rest of the work was done by the children themselves in the classroom. The pupils made the outside of their house look like the big white shingled exteriors that were characteristic of some of their homes. So excited were they about their plans that they invited the mothers to come to see them begin the building. The mothers were asked to return when the house was completed. It was a great satisfaction to many of the mothers to see what effective skills their 6-year-olds had developed in handling saws, nails, and hammers.

The boys and girls obviously gained appreciation of proportions as they planned the size of each room in the house. With the teacher's help, they got some feeling for placement and spacing when they decided where to put the windows. They discussed how pretty a big white house would look. As they drew their plans, the placement and size of the picture window and the front door were problems. Opinions differed, but after discussion a group decision was made and the door and window were placed accordingly.

Art Experiences Related to Other School Activities

Some of the Wisconsin schools have an art teacher or consultant on call. The time the children spend on art, however, is by no means limited to the time the art teacher reserves for them. Pupils in grades 4 to 8 sometimes have home art, industrial arts, and manual training. They may have experiences with a wide variety of materials, such as clay, wood, cloth, leather, metal, oil paints, water colors, crayons, and paper. In everyday activities there are many opportunities for thinking and planning, and appreciation of beauty. Some of the classrooms have unusual paintings, sketches, and block prints made by the children. Colorful draperies add beauty and interest to classrooms. Pupils who cannot express themselves with their hands sometimes enjoy creative writing. Pupils produce plays, radio skits, and poetry. The art teacher may spend from 2 to 4 hours with a group that asks for her help, depending on the plans the teacher and children have made for the use of her time.

Most people's desire for their children to have experiences in art is so great that some creative art activities are usually encouraged, even in school systems where for years art has been taught merely as a subject with little relation to life or even to other subject matter. Evidence of progress toward creativeness and exercise of imagination were observed in schools visited.

Children in a Montana school were not content with the materials usually employed for creative expression. Here a fifth grade took up knitting and crocheting and made a number of useful potholders, washcloths, doilies, and other gifts for their mothers and older sisters. Once a group of boys and girls in this school held a valentine tea for their mothers. With the guidance of girls in the high-school home economics class the



Each year children help to choose a picture to be hung in the school, Cedar City Utah

children decorated their classroom and the tea table where the refreshments were served.

In a class where many children were merely copying pictures or filling in outlines with color, a restless boy, with a suggestion from his teacher, went outdoors and made some fine original charcoal sketches of local industrial scenes. Another child made drawings of pets and sketches to illustrate experiences at home. Under each picture was a sentence in manuscript writing. One read: "This is the family." The picture revealed the kind of information that teachers often find helpful in understanding and guiding individuals.

In another school, children listen to a radio discussion of certain famous paintings and study the reproductions that the

program sponsor sends out each month before each program. County-wide interest has been aroused by the program.

In a certain Arizona school, Indian children are particularly fond of animals, especially of beautiful horses. Consequently, animal themes occur in their art work. Their models of horses are especially effective. Mexican children in this school show outstanding skill in making articles of pottery, in producing colorful paintings of scenes in their environment, and in weaving baskets. Both groups of children are inclined to be silent. To draw them out, the teacher makes it a special point to praise their expression through their art products at the same time that she encourages them to talk. The Mexican boys and girls respond; the Indian children are often silent despite encouragement. By the end of the first year, however, the Mexican and Indian children, 6 and 7 years old by this time, have made so much progress that they are not greatly different from any other group of 6 and 7-years olds.

In a New Mexico school, a fifth-grade class learned how to take pictures and develop them. One of their projects was a filmstrip and tape recording of the kinds of instruments in an orchestra. The pupils learned to evaluate their activities and projects on the basis of how interesting they would be for other boys and girls to see and hear. They selected the best to be recorded on tape.

Boys and girls in a North Carolina class have increased their interest in photography because one of their members has a camera with flash bulb equipment that he uses to take pictures of school activities. The pupils plan together for the scenes to be photographed, and particular attention is given to attractive arrangement of objects and children. It is agreed that every pupil will be photographed at least once during the year.

Looking at the Work of Others

In a Utah school, a city committee invites certain modern painters to send pictures to be exhibited to students and community. Members of the Fine Arts Guild are invited to help. The event has become an annual affair. Dozens of artists from all over the country send their products. A few of these artists have been students in this city. Each year at least one picture is purchased for the school; last year 40 were bought by citizens for their homes. In addition to providing opportunities for the children to become familiar with pictures and enjoy them, the pictures add much to the school's attractiveness. They are suit-

ably hung in library, classroom, and halls. An exhibition planned for the current year is to include outstanding work of students in the schools.

A certain Florida school, where pictures and films are made regularly available to teachers, has a picture-of-the-month plan in each room. Each month every classroom receives a copy of a great painting to look at and to study. In this way, each student becomes conscious of characteristics of certain artists' work or favorite themes and familiar with some of their paintings.

A West Virginia school is working with the local Junior League to make an art museum from part of the county courthouse. In this museum will be displayed the work of children in the community along with crafts and paintings of adults. In this school system, the art consultant is using radio to give lessons on the enjoyment of good pictures. A reproduction and book for study are sent to each teacher and pupil the week preceding the broadcast.

Dramatization and Puppetry

Dramatics affords creative outlets for many children. The boys and girls referred to on page 93 used their historical play to express concretely their patriotic feelings. Puppets are often made and used in presenting scenes from history or literature. A number of pupils learn to read aloud or to do choral speaking in ways that express original ideas and feelings. Young children carry out dramatizations on the playground. A New Mexico school has a stage in each primary room. The boys and girls create their own plays and invite their parents and the pupils from other grades to see them perform.

In a Mississippi school, a group of pupils of a second grade read a story and decided to dramatize it for the other groups. When they were well into the dramatization, they discovered that they did not know what they wanted to do. They had to reread the story, keeping in mind the parts they had planned to depict. Some careful reading and evaluation were required, and, as a result, when the children finally made their presentation, they did so with feeling and effectiveness.

A school in Oregon used dramatics effectively in improving social living and in helping the children assume responsibilities for helping others. Boys and girls discuss ways in which they help their mothers and then talk about improving their part in the home life, including making the home attractive. They prepare demonstrations of some of the activities planned so that

the next week's class may get ideas from them. An eighth grade in the same school in learning to write an effective letter discussed the importance of spelling and then planned skits to show what happens when people cannot spell.

A few schools are experimenting with television. A primary room, for example, viewed a television program about Aunt Polly and Uncle Mistletoe. They liked the program so well that they made puppets to represent Aunt Polly and Uncle Mistletoe.

The schools of one large city set up a television program for elementary schools and another for secondary schools. Television sets are placed in schools in which the teachers and principals want to experiment with the use of television in school programs. One of the programs was entitled "The World From Your Window." On another program, Gandhi's physician appeared. Music from other lands will be featured in a future program. In some of the programs the boys and girls themselves have a part. More and more, children are being asked to take part in radio programs and, where television facilities are available, to appear on television programs. Such experiences abound in opportunities for creative expression.

Singing, Bands, and Orchestras

Music affords enjoyable opportunities for children to express themselves creatively. Some schools have consultants in music to help the regular teachers. In other schools, the regular teachers are responsible for the music program. In one school, where classroom teachers undertook for the first time to teach music to their own classes, children and teachers soon became so enthusiastic about it that none of the group would omit music or ask for a special teacher.

Many schools are bringing music into projects and activities. In an Idaho rural school, for example, the children through pictures illustrated "The Ugly Duckling" to be shown by an opaque projector. The pupils made original songs and prepared commentary.

In one city, appreciation of music is brought to boys and girls through a committee of the coordinating council. This committee also sponsors concerts for the enjoyment of the children and the adult community. Several free but not compulsory matinees are provided especially for children.

In a Montana school, a third-grade teacher, not especially trained in music, nevertheless became interested in helping her boys and girls learn to sing and enjoy rhythms together, and

to compose simple songs and set them to music of their own. Other grades in the school invited the third grade to sing and play. Once the third grade planned and presented a music program for their parents. With such an example from the third grade, some of the boys and girls in higher grades were stimulated to a greater interest in singing together.

In a North Dakota city, teachers are encouraged to plan from day to day according to the interests of the children and the way they feel about specific work in which they will use music. Children frequently sing for neighborhood gatherings. A study was made in one fifth and one sixth grade to discover each child's particular interest in music and what he does with music.



Enjoying square dancing. Hammond, Ind.

A child was observed not finding any group to work with in any subject where he felt at home and could contribute. His teacher discovered that there was a choir in his own Sunday School and arranged for him to be urged to join that choir. There he became so much interested in music that he was able to feel himself later a part of other groups as well. In this city, a consultant in music works with teachers and other staff members.

One occasion recently afforded a special opportunity for children in the city mentioned above to sing effectively and creatively in a group. That occasion was the seventy-fifth birthday of the State. As part of a pageant given for the celebration, the schools developed a chorus of 700 children. Children and teachers studied the historical background that would be the setting for the music. The information gathered enabled the pupils to sing with feeling and spirit. Along with all the other pupils, children of Mexican and Indian families who came to work in the fields contributed to the music of the pageant with understanding and were helped to feel thereby that they had a part and were appreciated.

Certain North Carolina elementary schools have orchestras. For the children who play, this activity is an avenue of expression and appreciation. Children who do not play show increased interest in music as a result of having friends in the orchestra.

Dancing and Rhythms

In dancing and in rhythms, there is creative fun for everyone. A second grade in a New Mexico school experimented with rhythms. Their instruments were made of one kind of kitchen equipment or another. In this school also, a recreation leader worked with children of grades 2 through 5 to produce an assembly program of square dances and folk dances. Some of the children have made up the words and music of songs. In a Mississippi school, creative dancing is stressed in all the grades. Music, art, and health-education teachers plan together.

In a school in Washington State, folk dancing, rhythms, and ballad singing are made a part of the outdoor program. A sixth grade in this school made a study of pioneer life in their locality. The idea came to them during a camping trip. To get the full story of the western movement in United States history, they read many books. Exciting stories of the adventures of the pioneers were collected and exchanged. People who were thought to know the facts were asked about homes, schools, churches, towns, stores, and other aspects of life in pioneer days. Books unused for some time were drawn out of school, town, and home libraries and read and studied. Interesting relics were moved from attics to school or town displays. Families became a bit more appreciative of the old chair, the family album, the linen table cloth, the heavy iron skillet or kettle. Music, dancing, and crafts of the pioneers were studied. The boys and girls were fascinated by the pioneer songs and dances.

Their interest spread to the community. Parents and community young people came to the school to learn square dances from the sixth-grade pupils.

In summary, here are examples of the types of opportunities that occurred for children to be creative.

- (a) *In many schools, arrangements of the children's work on walls and bulletin boards are made by children themselves.*
- (b) *In some schools, children are provided with a great variety of materials with which to express themselves, including clay, paper, paint, crayons, cloth, weaving materials, husks, reeds, wood, seeds, fruit, and vegetables in order that every child may have many opportunities to find creative outlets that appeal to him.*
- (c) *In a few schools, children have opportunities to see great paintings and to help select prints for their schools.*
- (d) *Boys and girls often show appreciation of one another's clothes and learn to seek attractive as well as suitable clothes for themselves.*
- (e) *In a number of schools, flowers, furniture, and draperies are arranged by the children who take pleasure in the beauty of the effects they get.*
- (f) *A good many schools incorporate dramatics and puppetry in their school projects and activities.*
- (g) *Some of the schools provide opportunities for children to sing for the pleasure of singing and to play simple instruments for the enjoyment they get out of the activity.*



SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY AT WORK TOGETHER

Parent-Teacher Groups

The visits to schools indicate that most schools are aware of the importance of establishing a close relationship between school and community. Indeed the school and community for many purposes are one. One of the most active organized groups which brings people together from both the school and the community is the parent-teacher group. Although, in some places, these parent groups go by other names, the activities of all of the groups have much in common as far as goals and methods of working are concerned.

The Goals

Most of the parent-teacher groups in this study are in one way or other giving service to the school; most of them are learning about the work of the schools; and many are interested in some of the phases of curriculum construction, reporting on pupil progress, and other school activities. Many groups are making contributions to the health and general welfare of children in and out of school hours.

One South Dakota PTA president indicated that her organization existed for three reasons: "(1) To bring about closer cooperation between homes and schools; (2) to develop friendship between parents and teachers; (3) to bring about frequent conferences where parents and teachers can talk things over."

The Organization

Probably a typical parent-teacher group is described in the following report from a school system in Kansas. The report indicates the general method of organization of the city PTA groups. It also enumerates some of the kinds of activities such groups are engaged in:

Our city PTA council is made up of teacher representatives and parents from each school. The council coordinates the programs of the various unit parent-teacher groups in the school system. The year's program of the council includes four major activities: (1) It will sponsor one of the meetings at the local town hall. In connection with this, the council will select the speaker, plan the program, and promote the ticket sales for the town hall meeting. (2) It will appoint a special civil defense committee to work with the city defense committee throughout the year. In this connection, the first activity will be promoting home nursing courses. When a minimum of 10 parents and teachers indicate an interest in such a course, a teacher will be provided and the course begun. An additional course will be provided every time 10 other persons want to enroll in it. (3) It will organize a benefit for the Woodlawn and Lincoln Schools. These schools were inundated by the flood waters of the Kansas River. The benefit would be to raise funds to help them renovate their buildings, and provide necessary new supplies and equipment.

In a large number of cases there is both a city parent-teacher organization and an organization for each school. Many school systems reported that their parent groups are organized according to grade groups within a building and that each of these organized groups is represented on a school council which in turn may be represented on a city-wide council. The kind of organization seems to depend mainly on the size of the school system and somewhat on the importance attached to the work of the group in the particular school system.

How do some of these parent-teacher groups decide on their program for the year? In a variety of ways. For example, in an Indiana school system, a survey was made to discover what parents wanted to know about the school. The three general questions they wanted answered were: "Who is teaching our children? What are they being taught? How are they being taught?" These problems were used as a basis for beginning the year's work.

In another school, in order to determine what kind of program would interest parents, the parent-teacher groups sent out a questionnaire. On it a large number of possible topics for discussion were listed. Parents were to check those topics which they would like to have discussed throughout the year. At the same time, they made a study of the activities of children. Parents were asked to keep a record for an entire week of how the children spent their time—at play, reading, listening to the radio, watching television, going to the movies. Using the information from these two sources, the program committee drew up plans for a series of meetings. One topic which was indicated as very important was: "Are we putting too much pressure on children?" At one program a panel of parents and teachers analyzed and discussed the results of the study of children's activities.

Services to the Schools

As previously indicated, one of the important functions of many of the parent groups appears to be that of service to the school. Here then are typical examples of such services gathered from a wide variety of places.

Several parent-teacher groups helped put through bond issues for school buildings and improvements through spreading information and interpreting needs and aims of the school by radio, newspapers, house to house canvassing, and other means. They also work to get voters to the polls by providing transportation and helping with baby sitting.

In connection with the school building program one parent-teacher group was concerned about the plan being made for a new auditorium for the school. The group was given an opportunity to suggest improvements in the plan. Working with teachers, the superintendent, and other interested persons, the parents consulted with the architect and the resulting plan was a great improvement over the original one. Other groups reported that they had participated in planning new buildings or in planning to remodel old ones.

One parent-teacher group reports that its members assist in taking the school census. Another, that its members assist in transporting and looking after school pupils as they go on trips for educational and recreational purposes. An Indiana school group conducts a survey to get the names of children of pre-school age to be used in connection with school plans and building programs.

Although many of the organizations indicate that their chief aim is not that of raising money, many of them do raise money to meet needs of their schools that would otherwise not be met or that would not be met for some time to come. They have equipped kitchens for use in school lunch programs, purchased phonograph records for use in various rooms, bought library books, mimeographing machines, typewriters for the principal's office, and other equipment for schools.

Another school reports that its parent-teacher groups give a welcoming tea for new teachers and new parents and continue throughout the year to take other responsibilities related to persons new to the school.

Several parent-teacher groups consider it their responsibility to provide opportunities and facilities for out-of-school recreation for children. This assistance ranges all the way from establishing and equipping a recreational center in the community to providing transportation to pupils going to picnics.

Another parent-teacher group working with the junior high school sends invitations to all seventh graders who are to enroll in the fall to attend a social affair. The parents of these children are also invited. After serving refreshments, a committee explains to the parents and children some of the differences between the junior high school program and that of earlier grades. They answer questions asked by children and parents about life in junior high school. This kind of orientation has proven to be helpful in establishing a good attitude in the seventh grade pupils when they enter the junior high school.

Parent groups assist in various ways with services to provide school lunches. Some members help to prepare and serve the noon lunch; others supervise the lunch period so that the teachers will be free during the lunch period.

Typical of other ways in which parent groups are of great service to schools are these: helping to supervise and work with Scouts, Brownies, and similar organized groups; buying raincoats for the Safety Patrol; assisting with children's theater productions; sponsoring summer camp programs; and helping with band and other musical events and recitals. A school in New York State has among its parents a mother qualified to do library work who has volunteered to come 1 hour a week after school to keep the library open for use of the children. She also arranges exhibits of books in the hall cabinets and library. Another school reports that its parent-teacher group assists with buying, cataloging, and arranging books for the school.

library. An Oklahoma school group bought bulbs and other plants for school ground planting.

A parent group in Florida cooperated with school personnel in sponsoring Halloween programs that are fun, but not destructive—parades and parties seem to be popular activities in this connection. Several other parent groups reported a similar activity.

A school system in another city is organized to help teachers cut stencils for mimeographing and with other typing problems. This organization also assumed responsibility for making the school a more attractive place by supplying pictures and furniture in corridors and by decorating the principal's office.

Health and Related Activities

The parent-teacher groups, in many cases, do work that directly affects the health education of children. There are several examples of such activities. They are listed and briefly described here because many of the schools indicated that these activities are especially helpful in the total school program.

In a Georgia school, the children, teachers, and parents together became concerned about the poor lighting in the classrooms. All of the persons concerned studied the problem. A person from the State health department came with a light meter to gather data to help define the acuteness of the need.

A parent group, in South Dakota, assists in purchasing glasses for children who need them but would otherwise be unable to have them. Still others report serving on Safety Patrol committees and in some instances, where it seems necessary, parents participate in supervising pupil traffic at dismissal time.

In North Dakota, a school reports a project to enlarge and improve recreational facilities in local parks and elsewhere. The parent group interested the Junior Chamber of Commerce in the project, and many other groups participated in the project.

In a Wisconsin school, the parents sponsor medical examination for beginning pupils and assist with registration of the kindergarten pupils. This organization sponsors hearing and seeing tests and dental examinations for school children, and sponsors immunization and baby clinics. Many other schools indicate that they participate in similar health examination programs. A parent group in Nebraska equipped a health room in the school and provided milk for all children who needed it. A school in Louisiana reports having made a health survey

sponsored by a parent group interested in the health habits of the children, especially their food habits as they relate to health. A similar survey was reported by school systems in Florida and New Mexico.

The Teaching and Learning

In addition to contributing services to the general program and helping with problems involving health of children, parents and other citizens help in varying degrees and in different ways with the curriculum and teaching problems of the school. For example, many schools, in addition to the one described elsewhere, report that parents participate on report-card revision committees. Here they have opportunity to contribute from the point of view of a parent and to learn from the teachers and administration.

An Illinois school system described a project in which the parent-teacher members spent considerable time analyzing the "place of parents" in solving school problems related to teaching and learning. A committee studied the interests of parents. Parents expressed themselves as "wishing closer association with the school curriculum-building in such matters as homework planned so that it interferes less with good family living, better de-



A science fair for schoolchildren and parents, Baltimore, Md.

tection and treatment of illnesses, greater use of visual aids in schools and a slower tempo of learning in the early grades." There is no way of knowing if this interest is typical, but it is an indication of the kinds of things with which parents are concerned. Several groups report that the parents read all new material on curriculum that is produced locally and use it as a basis for discussion at parent-teacher meetings and other study groups.

Several parent-teacher groups reported that they organize special study groups among their membership to consider specific problems. These are varied. Examples are: In North Dakota a group organized to study the reading matter which children buy. In Indiana, a group organized to learn about the problems of teaching reading. They invited teachers and other qualified individuals to meet with them from time to time as resource persons. In Texas, a group organized to study "The School's Program in Arithmetic." Many schools reported study groups to consider the problems of child growth and development.

Of special interest is the work of a North Dakota parent-teacher association group that has studied the problem of the rural teacher supply. The group reports that it has not found the answer to the teacher shortage in this locality but that it is employing many approaches to a solution, one of which is appealing to girls and boys in the high schools who are looking for a field of education in which to specialize. The same State reports activities at the local and State level in the field of education of exceptional children such as the cerebral-palsied and the crippled.

In a Texas school the elementary staff felt the need for a bulletin that would be helpful to parents of children just entering school. The first-grade teachers (there is no kindergarten) worked on a tentative outline for such a bulletin, then the primary supervisor invited a mother from each of the 25 elementary schools (21 came) to meet to discuss the tentative outline and other details of content. As a result the bulletin was prepared. The initial issue has been revised. The project has been of great help both to teachers and parents.

These then are some of the activities of the parent-teacher groups. The essence of the spirit in many of these school systems is expressed by a mother in a New York State school system when she says "Our school welcomes the parents and they always feel welcome." The importance of wider participation by fathers in the

life of the school was mentioned over and over and in all parts of the country. Many school persons indicated the importance of parents assuming responsibility for planning and carrying out their own programs. Such a procedure would call for building these programs on the needs as parents see them and of starting where the parents and teachers are in their thinking, and going on from there. The activities observed indicate a real concern on the part of parents for better schools and an earnest desire to cooperate in bringing them about.

School-Community Relations

In addition to the work of parents and teachers in organized groups such as parent-teacher and study groups, there are still other ways in which the community and the school are brought closer together. Many of the instances described in this section show how the school and community can be of mutual assistance. Ways of bringing the school and community closer together are emphasized.

One instance of school-community work observed illustrates how a community of people completely reorganized its school plan and built a new school building. The superintendent writes: "This is a farming community and, looking about, members of this small community were shocked to realize that their children were attending school in buildings less comfortable than some of the barns where their Holsteins were housed. People in the community sat down together to study and plan. After much time was spent in arriving at a compromise out of vast disagreements, the solution became clear: school districts must be combined to achieve a desirable program for children and modern buildings must be erected to replace the 24 obsolete one-room structures."

The community considered problems of consolidation, taxes, and building programs. The school board published informative pamphlets, invited parents to attend school conferences, and kept the community up to date on how their building program was progressing. Farmers attended meetings in their immediate neighborhoods. A dozen or more good community schools were visited, consultant services were used, literature studied, discussions held. But from the classrooms, playgrounds, homes, farms, and from children and parents came the real basis for the building plans, and at the beginning of the 1950-51 school year, 425 children walked through the doors of a new school—the culmination of the hopes and dreams of neighbors and friends."

This brief description illustrates what is possible when the community has a real interest in the problem of providing better schools and when the school and community work together.

An Advisory Council

An Illinois school system reports an advisory council charged with improving school-community relations. It consists of from 35 to 40 members and was organized 10 years ago. On this council are representatives of all types of organizations in the community. When vacancies exist, the nominating committee of the council selects persons from organizations to fill the vacancies. The superintendent of schools and a few other persons are ex officio members. The purpose of the council is to advise the school on matters of public concern and to help the school maintain communication with representative community organizations. Some of the activities in which the council has taken leadership are: (1) They helped promote the beginning of kindergartens in the public schools. (2) Through studying the tax returns of the community and comparing them with tax returns in other comparable cities and by making the results known to the public, they helped influence the school referendum to increase the tax rates. (3) They conducted a study of school enrollments; this information was used as a basis for planning new schools. (4) The council studies the parochial and private schools, as well as the public schools. That is, there are representatives from these schools on the council and whatever information and publicity services are made available to the public schools are likewise made available to the other schools.

In the same State a school-community council was established. They report, "Out of desperation the first year, the new school district was organized." So much misinformation about such things as reorganizations, costs, and plans was being given publicity that the superintendent, school board members, and interested citizens felt it was essential to devise some way of channeling correct information to all the people who lived in the 100 square miles of the new district. Although the council was organized to inform, it soon began to do much more than that. Its members worked closely with the board of education and the teachers in developing plans for a building program. They studied community needs, talked with persons who were critical of the program, studied some of the basic issues of education such as school finance and school personnel. Perhaps this illustration shows the importance of using a real need—a specific one—upon which to organize activities for school-community relations.

A Bulletin

A large city described a bulletin it publishes entitled *Educational Services to the Community*. The bulletin is full of information about many phases of education. It states the purposes of public education; what educational opportunities the school system provides at all levels and in all fields, that is, vocational, general, adult, library, veterans' training, summer programs, after-school activities, and night schools. It describes graphically the costs of the educational program, indicates the source of the money, and explains how the money is spent. It describes in considerable detail what the public elementary, junior, and senior high schools attempt to do and how the program is developed and carried on. It describes curriculum practices in concise statements. The closing paragraph indicates the tone of the bulletin: "These services are provided by you and they are available to you, your children, and your fellow citizens. A widespread interest in and an intelligent support of these vital agencies by the community will insure improved services in the years ahead."

The bulletin is given wide distribution not only to parents who receive it directly from the school office but to others who run across the publication in many different places, such as dentists' and doctors' offices, and city club rooms.

Community Projects

A Kansas school system reports that 1954 will be the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of its city. Because of this, many classes throughout the city are studying the history of the city and developing proposals of ways to celebrate the anniversary. It is planned that the suggestions by various groups of children for the celebration will reflect their study and will be an outgrowth of class activity. The social studies teachers in particular will discuss ways of making their work more meaningful through this community activity. At least two other school systems reported that they are using a similar event to bring about better school-community relationship. This idea seems to present almost limitless opportunity for closer school-community relations.

Many schools report, however, that the demands made on them by community agencies sometimes become heavy, may sometimes be inappropriate or need more careful organization in order that better educational opportunities may result. An example of how such a situation was successfully handled is from an Indiana school where the Junior Chamber of Commerce wanted the school children to have a window painting contest in connection with

fire-prevention week. The Chamber of Commerce also wanted the schools to participate in a Christmas parade. They had also asked the schools to help in planning an Industry-Education Day. Many other similar demands were made on the school.

In order to reach a solution with respect to each request, the superintendent of schools appoints a committee which meets with the organizations concerned before deciding whether or how the school should participate. It is almost never possible, the superintendent pointed out, to give a direct refusal to these requests and in most cases something good results from planning together with the inviting agencies. For example, in connection with the proposal of the Christmas parade, the schools were expected to prepare floats. Also the school bands were asked to march. In connection with this parade, it had been a custom of the Chamber of Commerce to spend from \$1,600 to \$2,000 to bring in outside resources. When the committee from the school met with the representatives of industry, it was pointed out that there would be many ways to use the \$2,000 locally for the benefit of the schools. The plan worked out by the committee for the parade took into account what was good for the school children and eliminated a great deal of the expense. The important point here, however, is that in this school system all such proposals are considered and evaluated by a committee appointed for that purpose. The end results are many, among them better school-community relations, as well as better educational opportunities for the children.

This same school system worked out a somewhat similar plan to overcome the problem of numerous money collections. A committee of teachers and children planned a way to have only one money drive in the school for all community purposes. Their plan called for collecting for such activities as Junior Red Cross, Red Cross, Community Chest, and March of Dimes all at the same time. The reaction of parents to this plan was good. Some of the organizations that have community drives objected at first to the plan because they would like to have children publicize their drives in the home. The plan has worked successfully in the school and relieves teachers and children of numerous interruptions throughout the year. It was reported that the total amount collected for the various charities was greater than when individual collections were made.

Children Use the Community Resources

An Ohio school indicates that a closer association between parents, lay groups, and the school has come about through the efforts

of the children themselves. Community members' advice and help is sought by the children through interviews or by invitation to come to the school. Older members of the community, for example, are sometimes asked to contribute folklore and legends that are used in school activities. Adults who have traveled or who are interested in special types of handwork or who are engaged in professional activities of interest to the children are asked to talk to classes or other groups of people.

Other schools reported similar use of community resources. A specific example is illustrated in a school where a fifth grade developed a unit on safety and arranged to have several speakers from the community assist. The speakers discussed the importance of safety in different phases of community life. For example, a mother talked on safety in the home, a policeman on vacation safety, a fireman on fire safety, a nurse on food safety, a doctor on cold prevention and other health-safety measures, and a teacher on safety around the school. This procedure is not presented here as a new idea for it has been done to a greater or lesser degree in many schools. It is included, however, as a community contact that may be increasingly effective as the technique of using it is perfected.

In another school system pupils themselves help to establish contacts with the community and bridge the gap between the two. They send letters to business firms in the community inviting them to an Open House at the school or to visit the school at another time convenient to them. The response to the invitation was good and so was the result in terms of an exchange of information, development of desirable attitudes, and good-will.

The school systems visited agree that a closer working relationship and a greater understanding between the school and community is essential to providing good schools. The job of education is not solely the responsibility of the school. The school is a part of the community and as such needs the support of all citizens. Administrators indicate that whenever really significant achievements in a school building program or in other system-wide projects come about, they are the result of cooperative effort of all concerned—parents, other citizens, school personnel, and children. In the wide variety of school-community activities observed, the basic philosophy expressed in this paragraph is apparent.

Communicating With Parents and Other Citizens

No one can deny the importance of including parents and other patrons in the work and plans of the school. We have seen how parent-teacher groups function in various ways in school life and how school and community work together in a variety of ways. Another phase of the relationship between school and community is that of keeping all of the community informed about the school and its activities. A large number of schools indicate that they are sensitive to the need for informing the public, and a wide variety of ways seem to be used. It will be noted in the following examples that schools are attempting to make this information as nearly "first-hand" as possible by direct contact with adults in the community. It will also be noted that frequently the day-to-day work of the school is publicized rather than just special programs and events.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

A Kansas school system believes so strongly in the importance of a first-hand exchange of ideas between parent and teacher that for the past two summers a committee of teachers has worked in a workshop situation at a university on developing suggestions for parent-teacher conferences. Under the guidance of this committee's findings, there is a city-wide program of parent-teacher conferences and in most schools the equivalent of a full day is allowed each teacher for scheduling these conferences. The teachers are encouraged to work out ways for including the child in at least one of these conferences each year. A school system in Washington State has also developed an extensive guide to help teachers improve the parent-teacher conferences. Released school time is provided for the conferences.

Many other schools, such as systems in Washington State, have also indicated the importance of parent-teacher conferences as one way of informing parents of the work of the school, as well as of gaining valuable information and points of view from parents. In some schools, these conferences supplement the report card. In other schools the parent-teacher conferences are chiefly concerned with interpreting the work of the school to the parents and with exchanging ideas for improving both the school and the home environment of children. In these instances, the report card conference is a secondary consideration. One Washington State school system reports that 90 percent of the parents participated in conferences at least once a year. A school system in West Virginia

indicated that parent conferences were being stressed especially in primary grades.

Although the following example from a county in Maryland is not quite the same type of parent-teacher conference as we have previously described, it is most certainly a method of informing school patrons of the work of the school and involves parents and teachers working through conferences to learn from each other.

This county has no kindergartens at present and has no immediate prospects of getting any; consequently a large number (40 percent) of the children who enter school are not ready for first grade. Although the school is adapting the first-grade program to meet this situation, it is felt that parents could be of great help at home by providing experiences as substitutes for some of these kindergarten experiences. Because of this situation, a series of meetings with parents of these young children are in progress. These meetings, conducted by county elementary supervisors, are designed to help parents see the importance of giving children many and varied experiences which will be helpful to them in becoming more nearly ready for a school experience. These meetings have been going on in various parts of the county for 1 year only. They will be continued and enlarged in scope. It is expected that they will prove to be important in helping children adjust more easily to their first school experience.

Demonstrating

An Illinois school system reported a unique activity intended to inform the public of the work of the school. A local furniture dealer invited the schools to stage demonstration classes in his large store window. Fourteen classes were used for an entire week. The classes were selected from among those whose teachers volunteered. There were 6 elementary, 4 junior high school, and 4 senior high school classes. These appeared at scheduled times throughout the entire week. The classes were selected to demonstrate different phases of a typical school program. For example, a sixth-grade class spent its time in art and social studies activities. A first grade demonstrated reading; a second grade, arithmetic; a third grade planned a breakfast as part of a food unit. In the junior high school classes, English, science, and mathematics were demonstrated. The senior high school classes demonstrated shorthand, clothing, and English. The lessons were amplified so that they could be heard on the street.

A committee of teachers and principals will evaluate this activity before it is engaged in again. The general feeling of the chil-

dren and teachers was that it was a very interesting experience, but further evidence needed to be collected to determine how useful it was in informing the public about the schools. It is included here for whatever ideas it may present.

A school in Nebraska reports that several downtown stores allocate window display space to various groups of pupils through the school year. The space is used to show work of the school that will be interesting to parents and will inform the general public about the work of the school.

A school in Michigan reports an interesting use of the local museum as a medium of communicating with parents and others interested in the work of the schools. For a 2-week period in the afternoons from 2 to 4 o'clock, several elementary schools were represented at the museum each day. Exhibit cases were arranged to show how the arts, for example, were being used in schools to contribute to good citizenship. Groups of children demonstrated processes, such as mimeographing their school newspaper, science experiments, painting and other art work, making relief maps, and other activities.

American Education Week and Business Education Day

American Education Week seems to be quite generally used as the occasion for planning definite events to communicate with parents and others about the work of the school.



Parents observe the work of their children, Baltimore, Md.

One city invited approximately 50 businessmen to visit in the schools for an entire day during that week. The group was divided into 5 sections. They visited classes, toured some of the buildings, talked with student groups, and in other ways acquainted themselves with the program of the school. This activity is the counterpart of a day in the fall when the teachers visit industry.

The same school system writes letters to all of the churches explaining the American Education Week program, urges the churches to publicize the various activities, and invites church members to visit in the schools.

Again in the same school system, in the spring of the year, parents of all children who will be in the first grade the next fall, visit in the first grade to find out what that grade is like. The teachers, principals, and mothers of first-graders talk with the new parents to help them get a picture of what school will be like for the children. During the day in the school, parents register their children. About 2 weeks later, the prospective first-graders attend school and visit in the first-grade rooms. The children come on four different days so that the school will not have too many new children at once.

A large number of schools reported a Business Education Day on which the teachers are invited to visit local industries and businesses. In many cases the day is under the combined sponsorship of the Chamber of Commerce and the city schools.

One school indicates the purpose of its Business Education Day as: (1) To enable educators to observe the operation of industry; (2) to permit industry to illustrate the importance of free American economy; (3) to help teachers and counselors guide children in choosing occupations; and (4) to give teachers information on the jobs and working conditions of parents of children attending the local schools. In many instances this special day is one of the features of American Education Week although several schools include this activity as part of their pre-school workshop.

Newspapers, Radio, and Television

Many schools reported the use of local newspapers as important avenues in giving information to people of the work of the schools. The newspaper contact is used in a variety of ways. Several schools report that a specific person on the school staff is charged with the responsibility of contact and work with the newspapers. Reporters from the newspapers are in continuous contact with these designated individuals to learn of both usual and unusual happenings in the school. They are urged to attend special events,

to visit classes, to observe the work of parent-groups, and to interview visitors. One school system obtains information from various schools in the city through a special reporting form which is sent to the central office whenever activities or programs of special interest are planned. An Ohio school received great help from its local newspaper during its report card revision program. The paper published the old and new form of the report blank with a story of why the card was being revised and presented other important information about the school's proposed method of reporting.

The superintendent of an Alabama school system that assigns a specific individual as a "public relations" person says, "the schools can move only as fast as he (the superintendent) and the teachers are able to keep parents and the public in general informed about what is going on in the schools and the reason for changes and experimenting as they occur." This superintendent is undertaking this year to publish systematically in the local newspaper, brief items of information about local education "worded in such a way that people will be interested in reading about them and will perhaps discuss and think more about them."

An Arkansas school system prepares a 1-page flier which is frequently inserted in the local newspaper for distribution. "In order to fully acquaint you with the physical properties, the teach-



Ready to be televised. Baltimore, Md.

ing staff, and the work of the school system" these fliers describe building plans, school practices—that is, safety education, health programs, community study, work of the Parent-Teacher Associations, American Education Week programs, extracurricular activities, facts and figures about schools, and other similar topics. They are well illustrated and attractive in lay-out.

Radio, too, is an important medium for disseminating information about the schools. Some schools own their own FM stations and broadcast during certain hours of the day for the express purpose of describing the objectives and methods of the school's program. There is indication that television programs also are becoming important in interpreting schools although no such program was specifically described except the following one, in a Maryland county where a series of six telecasts were presented by the schools. They were entitled "Educating Your Child," and presented regular class procedures for a half hour. The first-grade lesson was on elementary science and reading, a second-grade lesson was on using arithmetic in connection with making lemonade, a fifth grade gave a dramatization of a fiction book they had read, and a sixth grade dramatized an event in history which they had studied.

Visual Aids

Several schools reported the use of pictures as one very important method of disseminating information to parents and other citizens. One school assembles pictures that show some of the school's important activities and displays them systematically in some of the downtown stores. Sometimes these illustrate some central theme such as "Education for Freedom" or "Planning and Working Together." Others report the making of motion pictures that show the work of the school. They are widely used to show parents, local clubs, and others how the schools operate. A New York school to which children ride long distances made a motion picture to show parents the work of the kindergarten since many parents are reluctant to have their children attend kindergarten for so long a day. This is cited as an example of how a motion picture may be a most effective means of informing parents regarding a specific phase of the school program.

Other Publications

Publishing of pamphlets and bulletins appears to be a popular means of informing school patrons and others of the work of the school. Usually each of these publications is designed with one

specific purpose in mind. Some describe a project that has involved a great many individuals. An Indiana school cites *We Plan Better Housing for Our Children* as an example of such a publication. It was published in order to inform the public about the existing need for more schools, what types are needed, where they should be located, and other pertinent information. Other bulletins from various schools are entitled "Your Child Learns to Read" and "Your Child Starts to School."

Many school systems make much of the Annual School Report which supplies statistical data and a description of the total school program to show how the activities are carried on to achieve the schools' purposes. Wide use of pictures is made in many of these reports.

Letters to Parents

Naturally enough many parents are especially concerned about what is taking place in the classrooms of the school. Often the answers they receive to the question "Well, what did you do in school today, Paul?" are not very satisfying. A Michigan school teacher has used a "neway" letter explaining the "how" "what" and "why" of her classroom activities. Although space does not permit printing the whole letter, enough is included here to show the content and spirit of this communication as one method of informing parents.

Vine School (Grade 6) Room 309
June 15, 1951

DEAR PARENTS:

Most of us have been together for the past two years. In these two years we have done many different things that have been interesting. The purpose of this letter is to share these with you and to tell you about some of the activities we have enjoyed especially well.

After our morning devotional period, we have a brief news period in which we discuss the important news of the day. Most of us can now read the daily newspaper and understand what we read and discuss it. This is followed by Social Studies. Social Studies help us understand other people and other countries as well as our own. In fifth grade we studied about the people of the United States—how they live and work and how each section of the country depends on one another. We studied the history of our country—how people came here from different countries and united to form a democracy—how a democracy works and what it means. In sixth grade we studied about our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere and how we depend on each other for the peace of the world.

When we begin a new topic in Social Studies, we list our purposes and then we plan together to decide how we will work. We usually do the following:

1. Divide into groups according to what our interest is.
2. We choose our leaders.

3. Our teacher helps us.
4. We hunt for facts using many different books and sometimes we write away for free materials.
5. We learn from other classes.
6. We learn from business.
7. We learn from our guest speakers.
8. We sum up what we learned and outline it in our notebooks.
9. We make reports and sometimes share them with other classes.
10. Some people give their reports in the form of a play.
11. Having a guest speak to us helps make our Social Studies more interesting and real to us. Here are some of the people who talked to us.

Miss Lienhart—spoke of her year in Canada.

Mrs. Wallace—spoke of her trip to Mexico.

Mrs. Hill—spoke of her trip to Hawaii and showed us her slides.

Mr. Lewis Soria—a student at Western from Ecuador spoke to us about the people of his country.

Mrs. Baker, who lived in Peru, showed us her movies and spoke about the Peruvians.

Rev. Charles Johnson—spoke to us during Brotherhood Week.

We all learned a lot from the trips we took. We made up a set of rules to follow when we go visiting and try to be courteous as we would like the people we visit to be our friends. Some of the places we visited are:

- * 1. The Public Library for Book Week.
- 2. The Public Museum for information in science and social studies.
- 3. A committee went to the City-County Health Office to bring back some information we needed in our health class.
- 4. Sutherland Paper Company.
- 5. Ingersoll Steel Company.
- 6. Kelloggs in Battle Creek.
- 7. The Jewish Synagogue.

May we share with you part of a letter Sutherland Paper Company sent to our teacher after we visited their plant? It makes us proud.

"We were very interested in the comments your students made concerning their recent tour through our plant. We have asked practically every group that has gone through for such comments but frequently do not get them. In fact, your group has done by far the best job in this respect. They also indicated the most interest of any group that we have taken through for some time. This was apparent especially in the little session we had before the tour."

Sincerely yours,

F. B. LONG.

We are sorry that all of you were not able to see our Pan-American program which we worked out with the other sixth grade. . . . We wish you could have seen some of our other assembly program also. . . .

You know we enjoyed working with our puppets. . . .

Mrs. Lines, the art consultant in our building, helped us in all our programs. We always made our own scenery using different kinds of materials, depending upon what we wished to do. . . .

Mrs. Dodge, our music teacher, helped us, too. . . .

We think we have improved our reading a great deal these past two years. We have learned to skim and get the main idea of a paragraph or page. We have learned to sum up what we read and made an outline. We read orally parts of the stories we especially liked. We know a lot more words than we did before.

We have accomplished a great deal in arithmetic. We have learned to do better what we already knew before and we found out some new things. We can divide by using two- and three-place numbers in the divisor; we can do short division; we can add, subtract, multiply, and divide fractions and mixed numbers. It is fun to do decimals. We have added, subtracted, multiplied, and divided them up to thousandths and we can round off our answers in division. Filmstrips and charts helped us better understand fractions and decimals. We are becoming more accurate in our work and we check to see if our answers are sensible.

It is very important to spell words correctly and these are some of the steps we follow to help us improve our spelling.

1. Pronounce the word.
2. Find out what it means.
3. Divide the word in syllables.
4. Pick out the hard spots, or any familiar parts you already know.
5. See if the word is spelled like it sounds.
6. Close your eyes and try to get a mental picture of the word.
7. Write it and see if it is correct.
8. Use it often and make it your own.

We have studied prefixes, suffixes, synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms. These help us make our stories more interesting by using a variety of words. Some of us enjoy writing stories and poems. Susan and Carole can write a poem for us on most any subject. We sent one of Susan's poems to "Story Parade Magazine."

In our Science class we did many experiments using the science kit we received last year. . . .

We started to use a new series of health textbooks last year, "You" in fifth grade and "You and Others" in sixth grade. . . .

Then last, but certainly not least, is our camping at St. Mary's Lake near Battle Creek. It is through your cooperation that we were able to earn enough money to take all of us to camp for two days. It was fun planning for camp. We chose committees to work out our problems and the people in the other sixth grade chose committees, too. All the committee reports were organized into a camp book which each of us has. Each one took responsibility for planning for the whole group. It was a big project and we started to work on it back in October, but we found out that if we all work and plan together, we can accomplish what we set out to do. We will not go into detail here about camp because we have our camp books to tell us about that.

In the past two years we have tried to improve in getting along with people and we hope we have succeeded. We know now that every person is important and that respect and courtesy is what is needed most to get along with others. We have grown a lot since the beginning of fifth grade. Our seats and desks had to be raised several times, but our teacher says we have grown in other ways, too. We have you to thank for many

of the gains we made because you have worked closely with us. And so end our days in elementary school and we all look forward to going to the new South Junior High in September.

Sincerely yours,

Another letter, this one from a superintendent of schools in Ohio to the patrons of the community, illustrates one way a school administrator has used to help inform parents about the work of the school.

Office of the Superintendent

Dear Friends:

The replies received from a letter recently addressed to a large group of representative citizens indicate that many parents and patrons of the school are very much interested in the teaching of the fundamentals of learning—reading, writing, and arithmetic. Methods of teaching the "3 R's" have changed and improved during the past 25 years just as the methods of instruction used in the Armed Forces during World War II were a great improvement over the methods used in World War I. Methods should be improved, for in teaching, as well as in other fields of human endeavor, we learn by training and experience. A generation ago a person could get a certificate to teach in the elementary schools with only one or two years' education beyond the high school. Today, elementary teachers are required to have four years' training after high school graduation in order to qualify for a certificate. It would be a reflection on the teaching profession if the raising of its standards did not bring about improved methods of teaching.

When children come home from school today and talk about their work, many parents observe that their children are not being taught as they were a generation ago. All of us are inclined to think of school in terms of the school we attended when we were young. I suppose that the first thing most of us learned in the first grade was our a,b,c's. Now when children learn to recognize words or phrases and even short sentences before they are taught the letters of the alphabet in order, and when parents find that different methods are being used in teaching addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, they sometimes get the impression that the fundamental processes of learning are being neglected. Of course, that is a natural reaction unless we see at first hand in the classroom how the pupils are being taught by modern methods.

In order to give parents an opportunity to see for themselves how reading, writing, and arithmetic are being taught in our schools, we are giving a special invitation to parents and patrons to visit any public school in the city Tuesday afternoon, November 16. From 2:00 to 3:00 there will be a demonstration of the methods used in the teaching of the "3 R's" in every school. After the demonstration, parents are urged to go to their children's classrooms for a conference with the teacher. The teachers and the principal will be glad to answer questions concerning the work of the schools and advise with parents about the progress of their children.

Very sincerely yours,

Superintendent of Schools.

School systems seem to agree that establishing effective communication with citizens of the community, whether or not they are parents of school children, is of great importance. Failure to do so may be very detrimental. Furthermore schools realize that it is not merely a question of informing parents and other citizens but of communicating with them for it is the exchange of ideas that often results in real educational progress. Some communication, as we have seen, takes place through the intimate contact of parent-teacher conferences; some by way of mass media such as radio, television, and newspaper stories. In all cases it is agreed that the language used must be understood by all concerned.

A PROFESSION AT WORK ON ITS PROBLEMS

Observation in the school systems described in this bulletin shows that teachers, administrators, and parents are aware of many problems which need attention in improving education for children. Most of the problems are complex. They involve more and better-trained teachers, a curriculum adapted to the needs of individual children, better equipment and facilities, closer school-community relationships, and an improved program of instruction. Many of the problems are long standing; some are presently acute in some communities. None can be solved by application of a



School is out. They are off to mountain homes, Breathitt County, Ky.

formula. They must be approached through a cooperative effort of all persons involved at the local level.

This bulletin shows how school systems in various States work to solve some of their problems. The best results are associated with the use of the democratic process at all levels of activity: with primary children, with older children, with teachers' in-service programs, with parent groups, and with teachers at work with supervisors and administrators. In all instances the problems are of real concern to those involved. Democratic procedures in any group insure the use of the variety of talents and abilities of the members, with each individual feeling that he is a part of the group and that his work and opinion count.

A thoughtful reading of these accounts from schools can promote discussion in teachers groups, offer suggestions to teachers for the improvement of instruction, interpret to parents the nature and purpose of the school program, provide ideas for increasing the effectiveness of teacher and parent groups, and be a useful tool in helping to evaluate elementary school practices, for it is through continuous evaluation of practices that progress results.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The appreciation of the Office of Education is gratefully expressed to the public-school administrators and to members of their staffs in the following cities for contributing the information which has made this report possible.

Alabama:

Brewton
Guntersville

Arizona:

Flagstaff
Tucson

Arkansas:

Jonesboro
North Little Rock

California:

Carmel
Marin County

Colorado:

Colorado Springs
Englewood

Connecticut:

Stratford
Westport

Delaware:

Wilmington

Florida:

Panama City
West Palm Beach

Georgia:

Athens
Carrollton (Sand Hill)

Idaho:

Jefferson County

Illinois:

Champaign
Decatur
District 10
Wilmette

Indiana:

Evansville
Ft. Wayne

Indiana—Continued	North Carolina:
Hammond	High Point
Indianapolis	North Dakota:
Muncie	Fargo
Iowa:	Jamestown
Waterloo	Ohio:
Kansas:	Akron
Lawrence	Columbus
Kentucky:	Youngstown
Breathitt County	Oklahoma:
Louisville	Ponca City
Louisiana:	Oregon:
Covington	Portland
Maine:	Pennsylvania:
Boothbay Harbor	Mt. Lebanon
Maryland:	Munhall
Baltimore	Reading
Garrett County	Rhode Island:
Montgomery County	Cranston
Massachusetts:	South Carolina:
Cambridge	Pickens Mill
Newton	South Dakota:
Michigan:	Hot Springs
Grand Rapids	Mitchell
Kalamazoo	Tennessee:
Minnesota:	Kingsport
Minneapolis	Texas:
Mississippi:	Austin
Greenville	Dallas
Missouri:	Port Arthur
Hannibal	Utah:
Montana:	Cedar City
Plains	Jordan District
Nebraska:	Vermont:
Beatrice	Rutland
Nevada:	Virginia:
Reno	Norfolk
New Hampshire:	Washington:
Portsmouth	Aberdeen
New Jersey:	High Line
Elizabeth	West Virginia:
New Mexico:	Marion County (Fairmount)
Los Alamos	Wisconsin:
New York:	Green Bay
Garden City	Milwaukee County
Oneonta	Wyoming:
Wappingers Falls	Superior
Yonkers	

Pictures not credited elsewhere are: Inside cover, Milwaukee County, Wis., first section, Marin County, Calif.; second section, Woodstock, Ill.; third section, Fort Wayne, Ind.; fourth section, Cedar City, Utah.

Index

- Ability groups in elementary schools, 30-31
- Activities, basic to teacher-pupil planning, 33
 - carried out by committees, 28-29
 - of student councils, 46-47
 - organized as curricular experiences, 32
- Advisory council for improvement of school-community relations, 118
- Age groups, 23
- American education week, 124-125
- Art, appreciation of, 104-106
 - in everyday living, 101
 - in relation to other school activities, 102
- Assignments, 41-42
- Aviation, information about, 99
- Arithmetic, general uses for, 67-72
 - how taught, 67-68
 - in advertisements, 70
 - number charts, 70
 - school parties, 68
 - school stores, 68-70
 - taught through community study, 67-68
 - travel, cost of, 71
 - used in planning travel, 71
 - used in performing school services, 71
- Beginning teachers, with new teachers, 19-26
- Bilingual children, 97-99, 104
- Bulletin for parents, 116
- Business education day, 125
- Camping as a part of the school program, 80-81
- Chambers of Commerce, aid in developing community programs food for children, 119-120, 125
- Child development, programs of study, 6-7
- Child study laboratory, 7
- Churches and the schools, 125
- Citizenship clubs, 92
- Classroom groups, evaluation of, 39
 - groups at work, 35-39
 - how organized, 32-35
 - types of, 27-32
- Cleanup day, 47, 48, 49
- Clinics, speech, 25
 - reading, 25
- Collections, 75, 89, 120
- College credit, for teachers in service, 25
 - seminar for, 25
- Combining grades, 31-32, 47-48
- Committees, duties of 28-29
 - elementary curriculum, 13
 - health, 14
 - of teachers, 13
 - planning, 13-14
- pupils, 23
 - selection of, 28-29
 - teachers, 12
- Community, as an interest center for curriculum, 87
 - as a source of curriculum problems, 87, 89
 - for trips, 89, 90
 - pupils contribute to activities of community, 109
- Community-school projects, 119
- Community resources, interviews with resource persons, 121
 - local history, 119
 - use of, 121
- Conferences, before school terms, 4
 - description of, 4-6
 - to orient new teachers, 20-21
- Conservation, activity of student council, 49
 - bulb exchange, 76
 - soil studies and other science activities, 75-76
 - soil samples, all States, 42
- Consumer education, candy and ice-cream sale, 48
 - cost of school travel, 71
 - for better home living, 85-86
 - in community study of beet growing, 87-88
 - school lunch participation, 77-79
 - school services requiring management of money, 71
 - school stores, 68-70
- Courses of study, sources of information about techniques of teaching, 57
 - distributed at pre-school meetings, 20
- Crafts, from other countries, 37
- Creative expression, aims, 100
 - as an area of curriculum, 100-109
 - scope, 100
 - See art, music, dramatization, puppetry
- Critic teacher services, 24
- Curriculum, development of, 56
 - teacher participation in planning, 10-18
- Curriculum materials, books, 61-62
 - dictionary, 64
 - encyclopedia, 63-64
 - films, 14
 - materials for art experiences, 102-104
 - materials in central office, 14
 - paintings, 104-105
- Curriculum planning, one city's plan, 14-16
 - one county's plan, 16-18
 - guide for teachers, 14
 - phases of, 14-15
 - planning groups, 10-12

- purposes of, 13
 - teacher participation in, 10-11
 - teacher-pupil planning for group work, 32-35
- Dancing, assembly program, 108
- Democracy, citizenship, 92
 - current events, 94
 - democratic living, 32
 - dramatization, 93
 - exhibits, 95
 - festivals, 94-95
 - learning to be friends, 95-96
 - organized studies, 93-95
 - ways and growth of, 91-95
- Demonstration classes, 8, 123
- Demonstration rooms, 8
- Dictionary, use of, 64
- Discipline, *See* evaluation of group work, 39
- Displaced persons in our schools, 97-99
- Dramatization, as creative outlet, 105
 - choral speaking, 105
 - of history, 93
 - in television, 106
 - puppetry, 105
- Drill, *See* practice
- Encyclopedia, use of, 63-64
- Evaluation, of group work, 39
 - of student councils, 51-52
 - of demonstration, 123-124
 - pupil standards for, 39
 - self-appraisal, 9-10
- Exceptional children, cerebral-palsied and crippled children, 116
 - consultative service for, 24-25
- Excursions, in neighborhood and community, 87-91
- Exhibitions of paintings, 104
- Films, as part of curriculum laboratory, 14
 - for education for better home living, 85-86
- Foreign language, Spanish-language majors
 - from college teach Spanish to sixth grade in city schools, 24
 - Latvian language, understanding through children of displaced persons, 97
- France, sixth grade study of, 94
- Freedom, U. S. as a free nation, 93
- Friendliness toward others, 95-97
- Gardens, home, 49
 - school, 54
 - garden clubs, 53, 54
- Geography, France, 94
 - locations, 98
 - Mexico, 43
 - skills, 99
 - understandings, 94, 95
- Grades, as class groups, 27, 28
 - combined, 31-32
 - taught by one teacher, 40
- Grouping pupils, according to ability, 30-31
 - according to needs, 30
 - according to similar interests, 28
 - by age, 28
 - by grade, 28
 - by preference, 28
 - evaluation of, 39
 - in committees, 28
 - within classes, 27-40
- Groups, classroom, 27
 - evaluating, 39-40
 - how organized, 32
 - values of, 35-36
 - ways of working, 35-38
- Growth, as development, 41
 - as progress, 40
 - of democracy, 91-99
 - physical, 130
- Guidance, committee for, 6
 - of individuals, 41
 - through evaluation of group work, 39
 - through creative expression, 100-101, 103, 104
- Handbook, to orient new teachers, 19-20
- Handwriting, in letters of inquiry or request, 99
 - in friendly correspondence, 65-66
 - learned through real use, 65-66
- Health, balanced meals for day, 79
 - camping and outdoor experiences, 80-81
 - nutrition in the curriculum, 80
 - play and recreation, 82
 - school lunch, 77-79
 - vacations, 81-82
- History, in connection with school play, 93
 - in study of changes in ways of living, 94
 - through dramatization, 86
 - through historical monuments and local documents, 93
 - through music and dancing, 108
 - western movement, 108
- Hobbies, as school activities, 42
 - hobby fair, 89
- Home living in the elementary school curriculum, 85
- Independent periods, 41-45
- Informing parents, American Education Week, 124-125
 - conferences, 122
 - demonstration classes, 123
- Inservice education, conferences, 4-6
 - observing other teachers at work, 3
 - publications, 3
 - self-appraisal, 9-10
 - seminar, 4-5
 - study groups, 6-7
 - teachers meetings, 3
 - varieties of, 1-2
 - work groups, 5
 - workshops, 2-3, 25
- Institutions of higher learning, advice on school buildings, 25
 - as aid to teachers in service, 23-25
 - assistance in landscaping school grounds, 25

- critic teacher services, 24
- leadership for lectures and workshops, 23
- Interests, centers for, 35
 - children's interests change, 35
 - on interest groups, 29, 30
 - teachers interest in student organizations, 50-51
 - that result in hobbies, 42
 - variety of interests in clubs, 53
- Interviews, 121
- Learning, children learn from one another, 35
 - institutions of higher, 23-25
 - to use a dictionary, 64
 - to use an encyclopedia, 63
- Letter writing, 65-66
- Letters to parents, 125-131
- Mexican children in an English-speaking school, 104
- Migrant children in a school program, 108
- Milk, provided by parent groups, 114
- Museums, use of, 89, 124
- Music, appreciation, 106
 - dancing, 108-109
 - festival, 48-49
 - singing, 106-108
 - rhythms, 108
- New teachers. *See* orientation of
- Newspapers, an avenue of school information for parents, 125-127
- Non-English-speaking children as new pupils, 97-99
- Nutrition study, 80
- Objectives, of inservice conferences, 4
- Observing other teachers at work as part of in-service education, 3
- One- and two-room schools, combine grades, 31
 - have pupils grouped for reading, 30
- Orientation of new teachers, automobile ride
 - around school community, 22
 - chamber of commerce help, 37
 - conferences, 20-21
 - handbook, 19-20
 - new teachers met at railroad station, 23
 - program for new teachers, 21-22
 - supervisory help, 21
 - visiting other classrooms, 21
- Other countries, children from, 97-99
- Parent-teacher conferences, 122-123
- Parent-teacher groups, assistance with curriculum, 115-116
 - cooperation in school-community activities, 112-114
 - goals, 110-111
- Parent-Teacher Associations as school and city-wide groups, 111-112
- special study groups, 115
- working with health and related activities, 114-115
- Parents visit schools, 125
- Penmanship for a purpose, 65
 - (*See also* writing)
- Photography, 104
- Place of parents in solving school problems, 115-116
- Play and recreation, 82
- Poetry, 67
- Posters, safety, 47, 48
- Practice, as a means of perfecting skills, as
 - reading, 58, 60, 61-62
 - arithmetic, 61, 67-72
 - geography, 94, 95, 98, 99
 - organizing reference materials, 62
 - spelling, 65
 - using encyclopedia, 63-64
 - using dictionary, 65
 - (*See also* handwriting, spelling)
- Problem solving, by the democratic process, 133
 - in science, 73-74
 - in the teaching profession, 132-133
- Programs, as part of the curriculum, 56-57
 - for new teachers, 21
- Publications, a phase of inservice education for teachers, 8
 - that parents read, 127-129
- Puppetry, a creative outlet, 105-106
- Purposes, of Business Education Day, 125
 - of student councils, 46
 - of teacher planning committee, 13
- Radio, a medium for spreading information about the schools, 127
- Reading, classifying materials for, 62-63
 - experiences leading to, 60
 - for the purpose of study, 60
 - for pleasure, 61
 - levels in, 31, 35
 - readiness for, 58
 - using a dictionary, 64
 - using an encyclopedia, 63-64
- Recreation, 82
- Report cards, revision of, 12-13
- Rhythms, 106, 108
- Rural schools, bird club in, 55
 - children share in planning lunch, 80
 - a county plan for curriculum, 16-19
 - one-room, 31
 - original songs for film strip, 106
 - reading about strawberry growing, 80
 - school stores in, 68
- School clubs, all-year garden club, 53-54
 - clubs adapted to community resources, 54-55
 - kinds of clubs most common, 55
- School safety, responsibility of student council, 48-49
- Safety patrol, 49
- School-community relations, bulletins, 119
- councils, 113
- community projects, 119
- School grounds improvement, a curriculum project, 34
- School lunch, pupil participation in, 77-79

- School newspapers as curriculum projects, 66
 School parties, 68
 School program, organization of, 56-57
 School services, children's participation in, 42-44
 School stores, as means of learning business skills, 69-70
 Science, conservation of natural resources, 75-76
 examples of field studies, 72
 examples of problem solving, 73-74
 in everyday experiences, 74-75
 study of changes brought by, 94
 Self-appraisal, as a means of improvement of teaching, 9-10
 Seminar, a way of improving science teaching, 4-5
 Seminars, as inservice training of teachers, 25
 Singing, as part of the music program, 106
 emotional release, 107
 music program for parents, 107
 responsibility of classroom teachers, 106
 socialization, 107
 Skills, fundamental, 57
 geography, 99
 improvement of, 41
 numbers, 67-68
 (See also arithmetic, handwriting, and spelling)
 Social understanding and experience, centers of interest for, 83
 classroom and school environment, 84-85
 home living, 85
 making environment attractive, convenient, and safe, 84-85
 neighborhood and community, 84-91
 understanding democracy, 91-95
 understanding other people and other nations, 95-99
 United Nations, how children study about, 95
 (See also geography, history)
 Soil study, map, 42
 Spelling, examples of activities that make use of, 93
 in school newspapers, 65-66
 in writing, 65-66
 Square dancing, pupils teach community, 109
 Student councils, children's evaluation of, 51-52
 how organized, 49-51
 kinds of activity, 46-49
 Pupil Council News, 47
 purposes of, 46
 school safety, 49
 spring music festival, 48
 Study groups for teachers, child development, 6-7
 Supervisory help for new teachers, 21
 Teachers meetings, 3
 Teacher-pupil planning, techniques of, 32-35
 Teen-age club, problems of, 53
 Television, as a curriculum aid, 106
 used to inform people about the schools, 127
 Three R's, arithmetic, 67-72
 reading, 57-65
 spelling, 65-67
 writing, 65-67
 Tool subjects, improving ability in, 42-43
 Travel, all grades, 90-91
 cost of, 71
 United Nations, how children study about, 95
 Vacations, 81-83
 Visual aids used in informing people about the schools, 127
 films in central office, 14
 Work books, 41-42
 Work groups, 5
 Working committees of principals and teachers, a city plan, 14-16
 a county plan, 16-18
 curriculum development, 12-13
 functioning of, 13-14
 report card revision, 12-13
 Working independently, alone and in pupil groups, 41-45
 Workshops, 2-3
 Writing, letters, 65-67
 school newspapers, 65-67
 local history, 93
 poetry, 67